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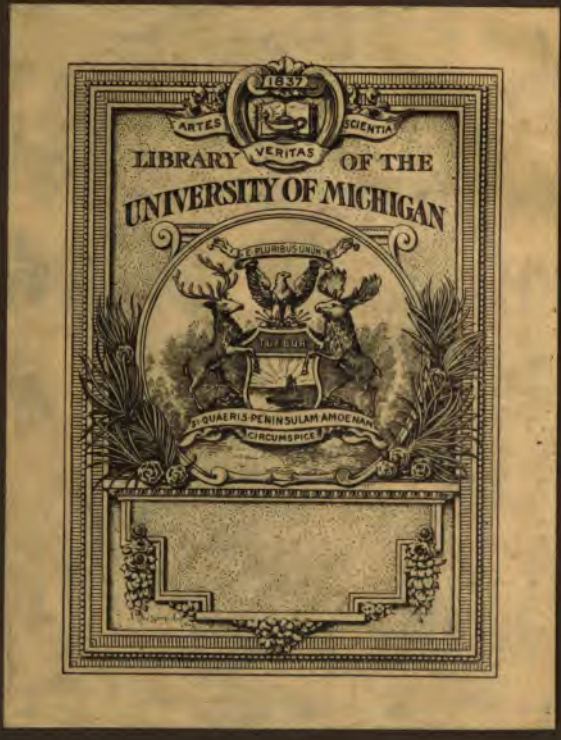
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FROM THE ORIGINAL EDITIONS

THIRD SERIES

POSTHUMOUS POEMS | THE WANDERING JEW
THE MASQUE OF ANARCHY | THE SHELLEY PAPERS
NOTES TO QUEEN MAB AND HELLAS

EDITED WITH NOTES BY R. H. SHEPHERD

London
CHATTO AND WINDUS PICCADILLY
1875

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POSTHUMOUS POEMS

OF

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

In nobil sangue vita umile e queta,
Ed in alto intelletto un puro core;
Frutto senile in sul giovenil fiore,
E in aspetto pensoso anima lieta.

PETRARCA.

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PREFACE.

IT had been my wish, on presenting the public with the Posthumous Poems of Mr. SHELLEY, to have accompanied them by a biographical notice; as it appeared to me that, at this moment, a narration of the events of my husband's life would come more gracefully from other hands than mine, I applied to Mr. LEIGH HUNT. The distinguished friendship that Mr. SHELLEY felt for him, and the enthusiastic affection with which Mr. LEIGH HUNT clings to his friend's memory, seemed to point him out as the person best calculated for such an undertaking. His absence from this country, which prevented our mutual explanation, has unfortunately rendered my scheme abortive. I do not doubt but that on some other occasion he will pay this tribute to his lost friend, and sincerely regret that the volume which I edit has not been honoured by its insertion.

The comparative solitude in which Mr. SHELLEY lived was the occasion that he was personally known to few; and his fearless enthusiasm in the cause which he considered the most sacred upon earth, the improvement of the moral and physical state of mankind, was the chief reason why he, like other illustrious reformers, was pursued by hatred and calumny. No man was ever more devoted than he to the endeavour of making those around him happy; no man ever possessed friends more unfeignedly attached to him. The ungrateful world did not feel his loss, and the gap it made seemed to close as quickly over his memory as the murderous sea above his living frame. Hereafter men will lament that his transcendent powers of intellect were extinguished before they had bestowed on them their choicest treasures. To his friends his loss is irremediable: the wise, the brave,

the gentle, is gone for ever! He is to them as a brigh vision, whose radiant track, left behind in the memory, is worth all the realities that society can afford. Before the critics contradict me, let them appeal to anyone who had ever known him: to see him was to love him; and his presence, like Ithuriel's spear, was alone sufficient to disclose the falsehood of the tale, which his enemies whispered in the ear of the ignorant world.

His life was spent in the contemplation of nature, in arduous study, or in acts of kindness and affection. He was an elegant scholar and a profound metaphysician: without possessing much scientific knowledge, he was unrivalled in the justness and extent of his observations on natural objects; he knew every plant by its name, and was familiar with the history and habits of every production of the earth; he could interpret without a fault each appearance in the sky, and the varied phenomena of heaven and earth filled him with deep emotion. He made his study and reading-room of the shadowed copse, the stream, the lake, and the waterfall. Ill health and continual pain preyed upon his powers, and the solitude in which we lived, particularly on our first arrival in Italy, although congenial to his feelings, must frequently have weighed upon his spirits; those beautiful and affecting "Lines, written in dejection at Naples," were composed at such an interval; but when in health, his spirits were buoyant and youthful to an extraordinary degree.

Such was his love for nature that every page of his poetry is associated in the minds of his friends with the loveliest scenes of the countries which he inhabited. In early life he visited the most beautiful parts of this country and Ireland. Afterwards the Alps of Switzerland became his inspirers. "Prometheus Unbound" was written among the deserted and flower-grown ruins of Rome; and when he made his home under the Pisan hills, their roofless recesses harboured him as he composed "The Witch of Atlas," "Adonais," and "Hellas." In the wild but beautiful Bay of Spezia, the winds and waves which he loved became his playmates. His days were chiefly spent on the water; the management of his boat, its alterations and improvements, were his principal occupation. At night, when the unclouded moon shone

on the calm sea, he often went alone in his little shallop to the rocky caves that bordered it, and sitting beneath their shelter wrote "The Triumph of Life," the last of his productions. The beauty but strangeness of this lonely place, the refined pleasure which he felt in the companionship of a few selected friends, our entire sequestration from the rest of the world, all contributed to render this period of his life one of continued enjoyment. I am convinced that the two months we passed there were the happiest he had ever known: his health even rapidly improved, and he was never better than when I last saw him, full of spirits and joy, embark for Leghorn, that he might there welcome LEIGH HUNT to Italy. I was to have accompanied him, but illness confined me to my room, and thus put the seal on my misfortune. His vessel bore out of sight with a favourable wind, and I remained awaiting his return by the breakers of that sea which was about to engulph him.

He spent a week at Pisa, employed in kind offices towards his friend, and enjoying with keen delight the renewal of their intercourse. He then embarked with Mr. WILLIAMS, the chosen and beloved sharer of his pleasures and of his fate, to return to us. We waited for them in vain: the sea, by its restless moaning, seemed to desire to inform us of what we would not learn—— but a veil may well be drawn over such misery. The real anguish of these moments transcended all the fictions that the most glowing imagination ever pourtrayed: our seclusion, the savage nature of the inhabitants of the surrounding villages, and our immediate vicinity to the troubled sea, combined to embue with strange horror our days of uncertainty. The truth was at last known,—a truth that made our loved and lovely Italy appear a tomb, its sky a pall. Every heart echoed the deep lament, and my only consolation was in the praise and earnest love that each voice bestowed and each countenance demonstrated for him we had lost,—not, I fondly hope, for ever: his unearthly and elevated nature is a pledge of the continuation of his being, although in an altered form. Rome received his ashes; they are deposited beneath its weed-grown wall, and "the world's sole monument" is enriched by his remains.

I must add a few words concerning the contents of this volume. Most of the Translations were written some years ago, and, with the exception of "The Cyclops," and the Scenes from the "Magico Prodigioso," may be considered as having received the author's ultimate corrections. "The Triumph of Life" was his last work, and was left in so unfinished a state that I arranged it in its present form with great difficulty. Many of the Miscellaneous Poems, written on the spur of the occasion, and never retouched, I found among his manuscript books, and have carefully copied: I have subjoined, whenever I have been able, the date of their composition.

I do not know whether the critics will reprehend the insertion of some of the most imperfect among these; but I frankly own that I have been more actuated by the fear lest any monument of his genius should escape me, than the wish of presenting nothing but what was complete to the fastidious reader. I feel secure that the Lovers of SHELLEY'S Poetry (who know how more than any other poet of the present day every line and word he wrote is instinct with peculiar beauty) will pardon and thank me: I consecrate this volume to them.

The size of this collection has prevented the insertion of any prose pieces. They will hereafter appear in a separate publication.

MARY W SHELLEY.

London, June 1st, 1824.

POSTHUMOUS POEMS.

LETTER TO ———

Leghorn, July 1, 1820.

THE spider spreads her webs, whether she be
In poet's tower, cellar, or barn, or tree;
The silkworm in the dark green mulberry leaves
His winding sheet and cradle ever weaves;
So I, a thing whom moralists call worm,
Sit spinning still round this decaying form,
From the fine threads of rare and subtle thought—
No net of words in garish colours wrought
To catch the idle buzzers of the day—
But a soft cell, where when that fades away,
Memory may clothe in wings my living name
And feed it with the asphodels of fame,
Which in those hearts which most remember me
Grow, making love an immortality.

Whoever should behold me now, I wist,
Would think I were a mighty mechanist,
Bent with sublime Archimedean art
To breathe a soul into the iron heart
Of some machine portentous, or strange gin,
Which by the force of figured spells might win
Its way over the sea, and sport therein;
For round the walls are hung dread engines, such
As Vulcan never wrought for Jove to clutch
Ixion or the Titan:—or the quick
Wit of that man of God, St. Dominic,
To convince Atheist, Turk, or Heretic;

Or those in philosophic councils met,
Who thought to pay some interest for the debt
They owed * * * * * *
By giving a faint foretaste of damnation
To Shakespeare, Sidney, Spenser and the rest
Who made our land an island of the blest,
When lamp-like Spain, who now relumes her fire
On Freedom's hearth, grew dim with Empire:—
With thumbscrews, wheels, with tooth and spike and jag,
Which fishes found under the utmost crag
Of Cornwall and the storm-encompass'd isles,
Where to the sky the rude sea seldom smiles
Unless in treacherous wrath, as on the morn
When the exulting elements in scorn,
Satiated with destroy'd destruction, lay
Sleeping in beauty on their mangled prey,
As panthers sleep:—and other strange and dread
Magical forms the brick floor overspread ——
Proteus transform'd to metal did not make
More figures, or more strange; nor did he take
Such shapes of unintelligible brass,
Or heap himself in such a horrid mass
Of tin and iron not to be understood,
And forms of unimaginable wood,
To puzzle Tubal Cain and all his brood:
Great screws, and cones, and wheels, and grooved blocks,
The elements of what will stand the shocks
Of wave and wind and time.—Upon the table
More knacks and quips there be than I am able
To catalogize in this verse of mine:—
A pretty bowl of wood—not full of wine,
But quicksilver; that dew which the gnomes drink
When at their subterranean toil they swink,
Pledging the demons of the earthquake, who
Reply to them in lava-cry, halloo!
And call out to the cities o'er their head,—

Roofs, towns and shrines, the dying and the dead
Crash through the chinks of earth—and then all quaff
Another rouse, and hold their sides and laugh.
This quicksilver no gnome has drunk—within
The walnut bowl it lies, veined and thin,
In colour like the wake of light that stains
The Tuscan deep, when from the moist moon rains
The inmost shower of its white fire—the breeze
Is still—blue heaven smiles over the pale seas.
And in this bowl of quicksilver—for I
Yield to the impulse of an infancy
Outlasting manhood—I have made to float
A rude idealism of a paper boat—
A hollow screw with cogs—Henry will know
The thing I mean and laugh at me,—if so
He fears not I should do more mischief.—Next
Lie bills and calculations much perplext,
With steam-boats, frigates, and machinery quaint
Traced over them in blue and yellow paint.
Then comes a range of mathematical
Instruments, for plans nautical and statical,
A heap of rosin, a green broken glass
With ink in it;—a china cup that was
What it will never be again, I think,
A thing from which sweet lips were wont to drink
The liquor doctors rail at—and which I
Will quaff in spite of them—and when we die
We'll toss up who died first of drinking tea,
And cry out,—heads or tails? where'er we be.
Near that a dusty paint box, some old hooks,
An half-burnt match, an ivory block, three books,
Where conic sections, spherics, logarithms,
To great Laplace, from Saunderson and Sims,
Lie heap'd in their harmonious disarray
Of figures,—disentangle them who may.
Baron de Tott's Memoirs beside them lie,

And some odd volumes of old chemistry.
Near them a most inexplicable thing,
With least in the middle—I'm conjecturing
How to make Henry understand;—but—no,
I'll leave, as Spenser says, with many mo,
This secret in the pregnant womb of time,
Too vast a matter for so weak a rhyme.

And here like some weird Archimage sit I,
Plotting dark spells, and devilish enginery,
The self-impelling steam-wheels of the mind
Which pump up oaths from clergymen, and grind
The gentle spirit of our meek reviews
Into a powdery foam of salt abuse,
Ruffling the ocean of their self-content;—
I sit—and smile or sigh as is my bent,
But not for them—Libeccio rushes round
With an inconstant and an idle sound,
I heed him more than them—the thunder-smoke
Is gathering on the mountains, like a cloak
Folded athwart their shoulders broad and bare;
The ripe corn under the undulating air
Undulates like an ocean;—and the vines
Are trembling wide in all their trellised lines—
The murmur of the awakening sea doth fill
The empty pauses of the blast;—the hill
Looks hoary through the white electric rain,
And from the glens beyond, in sullen strain
The interrupted thunder howls; above
One chasm of heaven smiles, like the age of love
On the unquiet world;—while such things are,
How could one worth your friendship heed the war
Of worms? The shriek of the world's carrion jays,
Their censure, or their wonder, or their praise?

You are not here! the quaint witch Memory sees
In vacant chairs, your absent images,

And points where once you sat, and now should be
But are not.—I demand if ever we
Shall meet as then we met;—and she replies,
Veiling in awe her second-sighted eyes:
"I know the past alone—but summon home
"My sister Hope, she speaks of all to come."
But I, an old diviner, who know well
Every false verse of that sweet oracle,
Turn'd to the sad enchantress once again,
And sought a respite from my gentle pain,
In acting every passage o'er and o'er
Of our communion.—How on the sea shore
We watch'd the ocean and the sky together,
Under the roof of blue Italian weather;
How I ran home through last year's thunder-storm,
And felt the transverse lightning linger warm
Upon my cheek:—and how we often made
Treats for each other, where good-will outweigh'd
The frugal luxury of our country cheer,
As it well might, were it less firm and clear
Than ours must ever be;—and how we spun
A shroud of talk to hide us from the sun
Of this familiar life, which seems to be
But is not,—or is but quaint mockery
Of all we would believe; or sadly blame
The jarring and inexplicable frame
Of this wrong world:—and then anatomize
The purposes and thoughts of men whose eyes
Were closed in distant years;—or widely guess
The issue of the earth's great business,
When we shall be as we no longer are;
Like babbling gossips safe, who hear the war
Of winds, and sigh, but tremble not; or how
You listen'd to some interrupted flow
Of visionary rhyme;—in joy and pain
Struck from the inmost fountains of my brain,

With little skill perhaps ;—or how we sought
Those deepest wells of passion or of thought
Wrought by wise poets in the waste of years,
Staining the sacred waters with our tears ;
Quenching a thirst ever to be renew'd !
Or how I, wisest lady ! then indued
The language of a land which now is free,
And wing'd with thoughts of truth and majesty,
Flits round the tyrant's sceptre like a cloud,
And bursts the peopled prisons, and cries aloud,
"My name is Legion !"—that majestic tongue
Which Calderon over the desert flung
Of ages and of nations ; and which found
An echo in our hearts, and with the sound
Startled oblivion ;—thou wert then to me
As is a nurse—when inarticulately
A child would talk as its grown parents do.
If living winds the rapid clouds pursue,
If hawks chase doves through the aërial way,
Huntsmen the innocent deer, and beasts their prey,
Why should not we rouse with the spirit's blast
Out of the forest of the pathless past
These recollected pleasures ?

You are now
In London, that great sea, whose ebb and flow
At once is deaf and loud, and on the shore
Vomits its wrecks, and still howls on for more.
Yet in its depth what treasures ! You will see

* * * * * *

You will see C——; he who sits obscure
In the exceeding lustre and the pure
Intense irradiation of a mind,
Which, with its own internal lustre blind,
Flags wearily through darkness and despair—
A cloud-encircled meteor of the air,

A hooded eagle among blinking owls.
You will see H——t; one of those happy souls
Which are the salt of the earth, and without whom
This world would smell like what it is—a tomb;
Who is what others seem;—his room no doubt
Is still adorn'd by many a cast from Shout,
With graceful flowers, tastefully placed about;
And coronals of bay from ribbons hung,
And brighter wreaths in neat disorder flung,
The gifts of the most learn'd among some dozens
Of female friends, sisters-in-law and cousins.
And there is he with his eternal puns,
Which beat the dullest brain for smiles, like duns
Thundering for money at a poet's door;
Alas! it is no use to say, "I'm poor!"
Or oft in graver mood, when he will look
Things wiser than were ever said in book,
Except in Shakespeare's wisest tenderness.
You will see H——, and I cannot express
His virtues, though I know that they are great,
Because he locks, then barricades, the gate
Within which they inhabit;—of his wit
And wisdom, you'll cry out when you are bit.
He is a pearl within an oyster shell,
One of the richest of the deep. And there
Is English P—— with his mountain Fair
Turn'd into a Flamingo,—that shy bird
That gleams i' the Indian air. Have you not heard
When a man marries, dies, or turns Hindoo,
His best friends hear no more of him? but you
Will see him and will like him too, I hope,
With the milk-white Snowdonian Antelope
Match'd with this cameleopard; his fine wit
Makes such a wound, the knife is lost in it;
A strain too learned for a shallow age,
Too wise for selfish bigots;—let his page

Which charms the chosen spirits of the age,
Fold itself up for a serener clime
Of years to come, and find its recompense
In that just expectation. Wit and sense,
Virtue and human knowledge, all that might
Make this dull world a business of delight,
Are all combined in H. S.—And these,
With some exceptions, which I need not tease
Your patience by descanting on, are all
You and I know in London.

I recall
My thoughts and bid you look upon the night.
As water does a sponge, so the moonlight
Fills the void, hollow, universal air.
What see you?—Unpavilion'd heaven is fair,
Whether the moon, into her chamber gone,
Leaves midnight to the golden stars, or wan
Climbs with diminish'd beams the azure steep;
Or whether clouds sail o'er the inverse deep,
Piloted by the many wandering blast,
And the rare stars rush through them, dim and fast.
All this is beautiful in every land.
But what see you beside? A shabby stand
Of hackney-coaches—a brick house or wall,
Fencing some lonely court, white with the scrawl
Of our unhappy politics;—or worse—
A wretched woman reeling by, whose curse
Mix'd with the watchman's, partner of her trade,
You must accept in place of serenade—

I see a chaos of green leaves and fruit
Built round dark caverns, even to the root
Of the living stems who feed them; in whose bowers
There sleep in their dark dew the folded flowers;
Beyond, the surface of the unsickled corn
Trembles not in the slumbering air, and borne

In circles quaint, and ever-changing dance,
Like winged stars the fire-flies flash and glance
Pale in the open moonshine; but each one
Under the dark trees seems a little sun,
A meteor tamed; a fix'd star gone astray
From the silver regions of the milky way.
Afar the Contadino's song is heard,
Rude, but made sweet by distance;—and a bird
Which cannot be a nightingale, and yet
I know none else that sings so sweet as it
At this late hour;—and then all is still:—
Now Italy or London, which you will!

Next winter you must pass with me; I'll have
My house by that time turn'd into a grave
Of dead despondence and low-thoughted care,
And all the dreams which our tormentors are.
Oh that H—— —— and —— were there,
With every thing belonging to them fair!—
We will have books; Spanish, Italian, Greek,

* * * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * * *

Though we eat little flesh and drink no wine,
Yet let's be merry: we'll have tea and toast;
Custards for supper, and an endless host
Of syllabubs and jellies and mince-pies,
And other such lady-like luxuries,—
Feasting on which we will philosophise.
And we'll have fires out of the Grand Duke's wood,
To thaw the six weeks' winter in our blood.
And then we'll talk;—what shall we talk about?
Oh! there are themes enough for many a bout
Of thought-entangled descant;—as to nerves
With cones and parallelograms and curves,
I've sworn to strangle them if once they dare

To bother me,—when you are with me there.
And they shall never more sip laudanum
From Helicon or Himeros;*—we'll come
And in despite of * * * and of the devil,
Will make our friendly philosophic revel
Outlast the leafless time ;—till buds and flowers
Warn the obscure, inevitable hours
Sweet meeting by sad parting to renew ;—
"To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new."

THE TRIUMPH OF LIFE.

SWIFT as a spirit hastening to his task
Of glory and of good, the Sun sprang forth
Rejoicing in his splendour, and the mask

Of darkness fell from the awaken'd Earth—
The smokeless altars of the mountain snows
Flamed above crimson clouds, and at the birth

Of light, the Ocean's orison arose,
To which the birds temper'd their matin lay.
All flowers in field or forest which unclose

Their trembling eyelids to the kiss of day,
Swinging their censers in the element,
With orient incense lit by the new ray

Burn'd slow and inconsumably, and sent
Their odorous sighs up to the smiling air ;
And, in succession due, did continent,

Isle, ocean, and all things that in them wear
The form and character of mortal mould,
Rise as the sun their father rose, to bear

* Ἵμερος, from which the river Himera was named, is, with some slight shade of difference, a synonym of Love.

Their portion of the toil, which he of old
Took as his own and then imposed on them:
But I, whom thoughts which must remain untold

Had kept as wakeful as the stars that gem
The cone of night, now they were laid asleep
Stretch'd my faint limbs beneath the hoary stem

Which an old chestnut flung athwart the steep
Of a green Apennine: before me fled
The night; behind me rose the day; the deep

Was at my feet, and Heaven above my head,
When a strange trance over my fancy grew
Which was not slumber, for the shade it spread

Was so transparent, that the scene came through
As clear as when a veil of light is drawn
O'er evening hills they glimmer; and I knew

That I had felt the freshness of that dawn,
Bathed in the same cold dew my brow and hair,
And sate as thus upon that slope of lawn

Under the self same bough, and heard as there
The birds, the fountains and the ocean hold
Sweet talk in music through the enamour'd air,
And then a vision on my brain was roll'd.

As in that trance of wondrous thought I lay,
This was the tenour of my waking dream:—
Methought I sate beside a public way

Thick strewn with summer dust, and a great stream
Of people there was hurrying to and fro,
Numerous as gnats upon the evening gleam,

All hastening onward, yet none seem'd to know
Whither he went, or whence he came, or why
He made one of the multitude, and so

Was borne amid the crowd, as through the sky
One of the million leaves of summer's bier;
Old age and youth, manhood and infancy

Mix'd in one mighty torrent did appear,
Some flying from the thing they fear'd, and some
Seeking the object of another's fear;

And others as with steps towards the tomb,
Pored on the trodden worms that crawl'd beneath,
And others mournfully within the gloom

Of their own shadow walk'd and call'd it death;
And some fled from it as it were a ghost,
Half fainting in the affliction of vain breath:

But more with motions, which each other crost,
Pursued or spurn'd the shadows the clouds threw,
Or birds within the noon-day ether lost,

Upon that path where flowers never grew,
And weary with vain toil and faint for thirst,
Heard not the fountains, whose melodious dew

Out of their mossy cells for ever burst;
Nor felt the breeze which from the forest told
Of grassy paths and wood, lawn-interspersed,

With over-arching elms and caverns cold,
And violet banks where sweet dreams brood, but they
Pursued their serious folly as of old.

And as I gazed, methought that in the way
The throng grew wilder, as the woods of June
When the south wind shakes the extinguish'd day,

And a cold glare, intenser than the noon,
But icy cold, obscured with [blinding] light
The sun, as he the stars. Like the young moon

When on the sunlit limits of the night
Her white shell trembles amid crimson air,
And whilst the sleeping tempest gathers might,

Doth, as the herald of its coming, bear
The ghost of its dead mother, whose dim frown
Bends in dark ether from her infant's chair,—

So came a chariot on the silent storm
Of its own rushing splendour, and a Shape
So sate within, as one whom years deform,

Beneath a dusky hood and double cape,
Crouching within the shadow of a tomb,
And o'er what seem'd the head a cloud-like crape

Was bent,a dun and faint ethereal gloom
Tempering the light upon the chariot beam;
A Janus-visaged shadow did assume

The guidance of that wonder-winged team;
The shapes which drew [it] in thick lightnings
Were lost:—I heard alone on the air's soft stream

The music of their ever-moving wings.
All the four faces of that charioteer
Had their eyes banded; little profit brings

Speed in the van and blindness in the rear,
Nor then avail the beams that quench the sun
Or that with banded eyes could pierce the sphere

Of all that is, has been, or will be done;
So ill was the car guided—but it past
With solemn speed majestically on.

The crowd gave way, and I arose aghast,
Or seem'd to rise, so mighty was the trance,
And saw, like clouds upon the thunder's blast,

The million with fierce song and maniac dance
Raging around—such seem'd the jubilee
As when to meet some conqueror's advance

Imperial Rome pour'd forth her living sea
From senate house, and forum, and theatre,
When [ ] upon the free

Had bound a yoke, which soon they stoop'd to bear.
Nor wanted here the just similitude
Of a triumphal pageant, for where'er

The chariot roll'd, a captive multitude
Was driven;—all those who had grown old in power
Or misery,—all who had their age subdued

By action or by suffering, and whose hour
Was drain'd to its last sand in weal or woe,
So that the trunk survived both fruit and flower;—

All those whose fame or infamy must grow
Till the great winter lay the form and name
Of this green earth with them for ever low;—

All but the sacred few who could not tame
Their spirits to the conquerors—but as soon
As they had touch'd the world with living flame,

Fled back like eagles to their native noon,
Or those who put aside the diadem
Of earthly thrones or gems [ ]

Were there, of Athens or Jerusalem,
Were neither mid the mighty captives seen,
Nor mid the ribald crowd that follow'd them,

Nor those who went before fierce and obscene.
The wild dance maddens in the van, and those
Who lead it—fleet as shadows on the green,

Outspeed the chariot, and without repose
Mix with each other in tempestuous measure
To savage music, wilder as it grows,

They, tortured by their agonizing pleasure,
Convulsed and on the rapid whirlwinds spun
Of that fierce spirit, whose unholy leisure

Was soothed by mischief since the world begun,
Throw back their heads and loose their streaming hair;
nAd in their dance round her who dims the sun,

Maidens and youths fling their wild arms in air
As their feet twinkle ; they recede, and now,
Bending within each other's atmosphere,

Kindle invisibly—and as they glow,
Like moths by light attracted and repell'd,
Oft to their bright destruction come and go,

Till like two clouds into one vale impell'd
That shake the mountains when their lightnings mingle
And die in rain—the fiery band which held

Their natures, snaps—the shock still may tingle ;
One falls and then another in the path
Senseless—nor is the desolation single,

Yet ere I can say *where*—the chariot hath
Past over them—nor other trace I find
But as of foam after the ocean's wrath

Is spent upon the desert shore ;—behind,
Old men and women foully disarray'd,
Shake their grey hairs in the insulting wind,

To seek, to [ ], to strain with limbs decay'd,
Limping to reach the light which leaves them still
Farther behind and deeper in the shade.

But not the less with impotence of will
They wheel, though ghastly shadows interpose,
Round them and round each other, and fulfil

Their work, and in the dust from whence they rose
Sink, and corruption veils them as they lie,
And past in these performs what [ ] in those.

Struck to the heart by this sad pageantry,
Half to myself I said—And what is this ?
Whose shape is that within the car ? And why —

I would have added—is all here amiss ?—
But a voice answer'd—"Life !"—I turn'd, and knew
Oh Heaven, have mercy on such wretchedness !)

That what I thought was an old root which grew
To strange distortion out of the hill side,
Was indeed one of those deluded crew,

And that the grass, which methought hung so wide
And white, was but his thin discolour'd hair,
And that the holes it vainly sought to hide,

Were or had been eyes :—" If thou canst, forbear
To join the dance, which I had well forborne !"
Said the grim Feature of my thought : " Aware,

" I will unfold that which to this deep scorn
Led me and my companions, and relate
The progress of the pageant since the morn ;

" If thirst of knowledge shall not then abate,
Follow it thou even to the night, but I
Am weary."—Then like one who with the weight

Of his own words is stagger'd, wearily
He paused ; and ere he could resume, I cried :
" First, who art thou ?"—" Before thy memory,

" I fear'd, loved, hated, suffer'd, did and died,
And if the spark with which Heaven lit my spirit
Had been with purer sentiment supplied,

" Corruption would not now thus much inherit
Of what was once Rousseau,—nor this disguise
Stain'd that which ought to have disdain'd to wear it ;

" If I have been extinguish'd, yet there rise
A thousand beacons from the spark I bore —"
" And who are those chain'd to the car ?"—" The wise,

" The great, the unforgotten,—they who wore
Mitres and helms and crowns, or wreaths of light,
Signs of thought's empire over thought—their lore

" Taught them not this, to know themselves ; their might
Could not repress the mystery within,
And for the morn of truth they feign'd, deep night

"Caught them ere evening."—"Who is he with chin
Upon his breast, and hands crost on his chain?"—
"The Child of a fierce hour; he sought to win

"The world, and lost all that it did contain
Of greatness, in its hope destroy'd; and more
Of fame and peace than virtue's self can gain

"Without the opportunity which bore
Him on its eagle pinions to the peak
From which a thousand climbers have before

"Fall'n, as Napoleon fell."—I felt my cheek
Alter, to see the shadow pass away
Whose grasp had left the giant world so weak,

That every pigmy kick'd it as it lay;
And much I grieved to think how power and will
In opposition rule our mortal day,

And why God made irreconcileable
Good and the means of good; and for despair
I half disdain'd mine eyes' desire to fill

With the spent vision of the times that were
And scarce have ceased to be.—"Dost thou behold,"
Said my guide, "those spoilers spoil'd, Voltaire,

"Frederic, and Paul, Catherine, and Leopold,
And hoary anarchs, demagogues, and sage—
—— name the world thinks always old,

"For in the battle, life and they did wage,
She remain'd conqueror. I was overcome
By my own heart alone, which neither age,

"Nor tears, nor infamy, nor new the tomb
Could temper to its object."—"Let them pass,"
I cried, "the world and its mysterious doom

"Is not so much more glorious than it was,
That I desire to worship those who drew
New figures on its false and fragile glass

"As the old faded."—"Figures ever new
Rise on the bubble, paint them as you may;
We have but thrown, as those before us threw,

"Our shadows on it as it past away.
But mark how chain'd to the triumphal chair
The mighty phantoms of an elder day;

"All that is mortal of great Plato there
Expiates the joy and woe his master knew not;
The star that ruled his doom was far too fair,

"And life, where long that flower of Heaven grew not,
Conquer'd that heart by love, which gold, or pain,
Or age, or sloth, or slavery could subdue not.

"And near walk the [ ] twain,
The tutor and his pupil, whom Dominion
Follow'd as tame as vulture in a chain.

"The world was darken'd beneath either pinion
Of him whom from the flock of conquerors
Fame singled out for her thunder-bearing minion;

"The other long outlived both woes and wars,
Throned in the thoughts of men, and still had kept
The jealous key of truth's eternal doors,

"If Bacon's eagle spirit had not leapt
Like lightning out of darkness—he compell'd
The Proteus shape of Nature as it slept

"To wake, and lead him to the caves that held
The treasure of the secrets of its reign.
See the great bards of elder time, who quell'd

"The passions which they sung, as by their strain
May well be known: their living melody
Tempers its own contagion to the vein

"Of those who are infected with it—I
Have suffer'd what I wrote, or viler pain!
And so my words have seeds of misery"——

* * * * * * *
* * * * * *
* * * * * * *

[There is a chasm here in the MS. which it is impossible to fill up. It appears from the context, that other shapes pass, and that Rousseau still stood beside the dreamer, as]—

——— he pointed to a company,
Midst whom I quickly recognised the heirs
Of Cæsar's crime, from him to Constantine;
The anarch chiefs, whose force and murderous snares

Had founded many a sceptre-bearing line,
And spread the plague of gold and blood abroad:
And Gregory and John, and men divine,

Who rose like shadows between man and God;
Till that eclipse, still hanging over heaven,
Was worshipp'd by the world o'er which they strode,

For the true sun it quench'd—"Their power was given
But to destroy," replied the leader:—"I
Am one of those who have created, even

"If it be but a world of agony."—
"Whence comest thou? and whither goest thou?
How did thy course begin?" I said, "and why?

"Mine eyes are sick of this perpetual flow
Of people, and my heart sick of one sad thought—
Speak!"—"Whence I am, I partly seem to know,

"And how and by what paths I have been brought
To this dread pass, methinks even thou mayst guess;—
Why this should be, my mind can compass not;

"Whither the conqueror hurries me, still less;—
But follow thou, and from spectator turn
Actor or victim in this wretchedness,

"And what thou wouldst be taught I then may learn
From thee. Now listen:—In the April prime,
When all the forest tips began to burn

"With kindling green, touch'd by the azure clime
Of the young year's dawn, I was laid asleep
Under a mountain, which from unknown time

"Had yawn'd into a cavern, high and deep;
And from it came a gentle rivulet,
Whose water, like clear air, in its calm sweep

"Bent the soft grass, and kept forever wet
The stems of the sweet flowers, and fill'd the grove
With sounds, which whoso hears must needs forget

"All pleasure and all pain, all hate and love,
Which they had known before that hour of rest;
A sleeping mother then would dream not of

"Her only child who died upon her breast
At eventide—a king would mourn no more
The crown of which his brows were disppossest

"When the sun linger'd o'er his ocean floor,
To gild his rival's new prosperity.
Thou wouldst forget thus vainly to deplore

"Ills, which if ills can find no cure from thee,
The thought of which no other sleep will quell,
Nor other music blot from memory,

"So sweet and deep is the oblivious spell;
And whether life had been before that sleep
The heaven which I imagine, or a hell

"Like this harsh world in which I wake to weep,
I know not. I arose, and for a space
The scene of woods and waters seem'd to keep,

"Though it was now broad day, a gentle trace
Of light diviner than the common sun
Sheds on the common earth, and all the place

"Was fill'd with magic sounds woven into one
Oblivious melody, confusing sense
Amid the gliding waves and shadows dun;

"And, as I look'd, the bright omnipresence
Of morning through the orient cavern flow'd,
And the sun's image radiantly intense

"Burn'd on the waters of the well that glow'd
Like gold, and threaded all the forest's maze
With winding paths of emerald fire; there stood

"Amid the sun, as he amid the blaze
Of his own glory, on the vibrating
Floor of the fountain, paved with flashing rays,

"A Shape all light, which with one hand did fling
Dew on the earth, as if she were the dawn,
And the invisible rain did ever sing

"A silver music on the mossy lawn;
And still before me on the dusky grass,
Iris her many-colour'd scarf had drawn:

"In her right hand she bore a crystal glass,
Mantling with bright Nepenthe; the fierce splendour
Fell from her as she moved under the mass

"Out of the deep cavern, with palms so tender,
Their tread broke not the mirror of its billow;
She glided along the river, and did bend her

"Head under the dark boughs, till like a willow,
Her fair hair swept the bosom of the stream
That whisper'd with delight to be its pillow.

"As one enamour'd is upborne in dream
O'er lily-paven lakes mid silver mist,
To wondrous music, so this shape might seem

"Partly to tread the waves with feet which kiss'd
The dancing foam; partly to glide along
The air which roughen'd the moist amethyst,

"Or the faint morning beams that fell among
The trees, or the soft shadows of the trees;
And her feet, ever to the ceaseless song

"Of leaves, and winds, and waves, and birds, and bees,
And falling drops, moved to a measure new
Yet sweet, as on the summer evening breeze,

"Up from the lake a shape of golden dew
Between two rocks, athwart the rising moon,
Dances i' the wind, where never eagle flew;

"And still her feet, no less than the sweet tune
To which they moved, seem'd as they moved, to blot
The thoughts of him who gazed on them; and soon

"All that was, seem'd as if it had been not;
And all the gazer's mind was strewn beneath
Her feet like embers; and she, thought by thought,

"Trampled its sparks into the dust of death;
As day upon the threshold of the east
Treads out the lamps of night, until the breath

"Of darkness re-illumine even the least
Of heaven's living eyes—like day she came,
Making the night a dream; and ere she ceased

"To move, as one between desire and shame
Suspended, I said—If, as it doth seem,
Thou comest from the realm without a name,

"Into this valley of perpetual dream,
Shew whence I came, and where I am, and why—
Pass not away upon the passing stream.

"Arise and quench thy thirst, was her reply.
And as a shut lily, stricken by the wand
Of dewy morning's vital alchemy,

"I rose; and, bending at her sweet command
Touch'd with faint lips the cup she raised,
And suddenly my brain became as sand

"Where the first wave had more than half erased
The track of deer on desert Labrador;
Whilst the wolf, from which they fled amazed,

"Leaves his stamp visibly upon the shore,
Until the second bursts;—so on my sight
Burst a new vision, never seen before,

"And the fair shaped waned in the coming light,
As veil by veil the silent splendour drops
From Lucifer, amid the chrysolite

"Of sun-rise, ere it tinge the mountain tops;
And as the presence of that fairest planet,
Although unseen, is felt by one who hopes

"That his day's path may end as he began it,
In that star's smile, whose light is like the scent
Of a jonquil when evening breezes fan it,

"Or the soft note in which his dear lament
The Brescian shepherd breathes, or the caress
That turn'd his weary slumber to content;*

"So knew I in that light's severe excess
The presence of that shape which on the stream
Moved, as I moved along the wilderness,

"More dimly than a day-appearing dream,
The ghost of a forgotten form of sleep;
A light of heaven, whose half-extinguish'd beam

"Through the sick day in which we wake to weep,
Glimmers, for ever sought, for ever lost;
So did that shape its obscure tenour keep

"Beside my path, as silent as a ghost;
But the new Vision, and the cold bright car,
With solemn speed and stunning music, crost

* The favourite song, "Stanco di pascolar le peccorelle," is a Brescian national air.

"The forest, and as if from some dread war
Triumphantly returning, the loud million
Fiercely extoll'd the fortune of her star.

"A moving arch of victory, the vermilion
And green and azure plumes of Iris had
Built high over her wind-wing'd pavilion,

"And underneath ethereal glory clad
The wilderness, and far before her flew
The tempest of the splendour, which forbade

"Shadow to fall from leaf and stone; the crew
Seem'd in that light, like atomies to dance
Within a sunbeam; some upon the new

"Embroidery of flowers, that did enhance
The grassy vesture of the desert, play'd,
Forgetful of the chariot's swift advance;

"Others stood gazing, till within the shade
Of the great mountain its light left them dim;
Others outspeeded it; and others made

"Circles around it, like the clouds that swim
Round the high moon in a bright sea of air;
And more did follow, with exulting hymn,

"The chariot and the captives fetter'd there:—
But all like bubbles on an eddying flood
Fell into the same track at last, and were

"Borne onward.—I among the multitude
Was swept—me, sweetest flowers delay'd not long;
Me, not the shadow nor the solitude;

"Me, not that falling stream's Lethean song;
Me, not the phantom of that early form,
Which moved upon its motion—but among

"The thickest billows of that living storm
I plunged, and bared my bosom to the clime
Of that cold light, whose airs too soon deform.

"Before the chariot had begun to climb
The opposing steep of that mysterious dell,
Behold a wonder worthy of the rhyme

"Of him who from the lowest depths of hell,
Through every paradise and through all glory,
Love led serene, and who return'd to tell

"The words of hate and care; the wondrous story
How all things are transfigured except Love;
For deaf as is a sea, which wrath makes hoary,

"The world can hear not the sweet notes that move
The sphere whose light is melody to lovers—
A wonder worthy of his rhyme—the grove

"Grew dense with shadows to its inmost covers,
The earth was grey with phantoms, and the air
Was peopled with dim forms, as when there hovers

"A flock of vampire-bats before the glare
Of the tropic sun, bringing, ere evening,
Strange night upon some Indian vale;—thus were

"Phantoms diffused around; and some did fling
Shadows of shadows, yet unlike themselves,
Behind them; some like eaglets on the wing

"Were lost in the white day; others like elves
Danced in a thousand unimagined shapes
Upon the sunny streams and grassy shelves;

"And others sate chattering like restless apes
On vulgar hands, * * * * *
Some made a cradle of the ermined capes

"Of kingly mantles; some across the tire
Of pontiffs rode, like demons; others play'd
Under the crown which girt with empire

"A baby's or an idiot's brow, and made
Their nests in it. The old anatomies
Sate hatching their bare broods under the shade

"Of demon wings, and laugh'd from their dead eyes
To reassume the delegated power,
Array'd in which those worms did monarchize,

"Who make this earth their charnel. Others more
Humble, like falcons, sate upon the fist
Of common men, and round their heads did soar;

"Or like small gnats and flies, as thick as mist
On evening marshes, throng'd about the brow
Of lawyers, statesmen, priest and theorist;—

"And others, like discolour'd flakes of snow
On fairest bosoms and the sunniest hair,
Fell, and were melted by the youthful glow

"Which they extinguish'd; and, like tears, they were
A veil to those from whose faint lids they rain'd
In drops of sorrow. I became aware

"Of whence those forms proceeded which thus stain'd
The track in which we moved. After brief space,
From every form the beauty slowly waned;

"From every firmest limb and fairest face
The strength and freshness fell like dust, and left
The action and the shape without the grace

"Of life. The marble brow of youth was cleft
With care; and in those eyes where once hope shone,
Desire, like a lioness bereft

"Of her last cub, glared ere it died; each one
Of that great crowd sent forth incessantly
These shadows, numerous as the dead leaves blown

"In autumn evening from a poplar tree.
Each like himself and like each other were
At first; but some distorted seem'd to be

"Obscure clouds, moulded by the casual air;
And of this stuff the car's creative ray
Wrapt all the busy phantoms that were there,

"As the sun shapes the clouds; thus on the way
Mask after mask fell from the countenance
And form of all; and long before the day

"Was old, the joy which waked like heaven's glance
The sleepers in the oblivious valley, died;
And some grew weary of the ghastly dance,

"And fell, as I have fall'n, by the way side;—
Those soonest from whose forms most shadows past,
And least of strength and beauty did abide.

"Then, what is life?" I cried——

FRAGMENTS

FROM AN UNFINISHED DRAMA.

HE came like a dream in the dawn of life,
He fled like a shadow before its noon;
He is gone, and my peace is turn'd to strife,
And I wander and wane like the weary moon.
O sweet Echo, wake,
And for my sake
Make answer the while my heart shall break!

But heart has a music which Echo's lips,
Though tender and true, yet can answer not,
And the shadow that moves in the soul's eclipse
Can return not the kiss by his now forgot;
Sweet lips! he who hath
On my desolate path
Cast the darkness of absence worse than death

Indian. And if my grief should still be dearer to me
Than all the pleasure in the world beside,
Why would you lighten it?—

Lady. I offer only
That which I seek, some human sympathy
In this mysterious island.

The Indian. Oh! my friend,
My sister, my beloved! What do I say?
My brain is dizzy and I scarce know whether
I speak to thee or her. Peace, perturbed heart!
I am to thee only as thou to mine,
The passing wind which heals the brow at noon,
And may strike cold into the breast at night,
Yet cannot linger where it soothes the most,
Or long soothe could it linger. But you said
You also loved?

Lady. Loved! Oh, I love. Methinks
This word of love is fit for all the world,
And that for gentle hearts another name
Would speak of gentler thoughts than the world owns.
I have loved.

The Indian. And thou lovest not? if so
Young as thou art thou canst afford to weep.

Lady. Oh! would that I could claim exemption
From all the bitterness of that sweet name.
I loved, I love, and when I love no more
Let joys and grief perish, and leave despair
To ring the knell of youth. He stood beside me,
The embodied vision of the brightest dream,
Which like a dawn heralds the day of life;
The shadow of his presence made my world
A paradise. All familiar things he touch'd,
All common words he spoke, became to me
Like forms and sounds of a diviner world.
He was as is the sun in his fierce youth,
As terrible and lovely as a tempest;
He came, and went, and left me what I am.
Alas! Why must I think how oft we two
Have sate together near the river springs,

Under the green pavilion which the willow
Spreads on the floor of the unbroken fountain,
Strewn by the nurslings that linger there,
Over that islet paved with flowers and moss,
While the musk-rose leaves, like flakes of crimson snow,
Shower'd on us, and the dove mourn'd in the pine,
Sad prophetess of sorrows not our own.

Indian. Your breath is like soft music, your words are
The echoes of a voice which on my heart
Sleeps like a melody of early days.
But as you said ——

Lady. He was so awful, yet
So beautiful in mystery and terror,
Calming me as the loveliness of heaven
Soothes the unquiet sea:—and yet not so,
For he seem'd stormy, and would often seem
A quenchless sun mask'd in portentous clouds;
For such his thoughts, and even his actions were;
But he was not of them, nor they of him,
But as they hid his splendour from the earth.
Some said he was a man of blood and peril,
And steep'd in bitter infamy to the lips.
More need was there I should be innocent,
More need that I should be most true and kind,
And much more need that there should be found one
To share remorse, and scorn and solitude,
And all the ills that wait on those who do
The tasks of ruin in the world of life.
He fled and I have follow'd him.

February, 1822.

PRINCE ATHANASE.

A FRAGMENT.

THERE was a youth, who, as with toil and travel,
Had grown quite weak and grey before his time;
Nor any could the restless griefs unravel

Which burn'd within him, withering up his prime
And goading him, like fiends, from land to land.
Not his the load of any secret crime,

For nought of ill his heart could understand,
But pity and wild sorrow for the same;—
Not his the thirst for glory or command

Baffled with blast of hope-consuming shame;
Nor evil joys which fire the vulgar breast
And quench in speedy smoke its feeble flame,

Had left within his soul their dark unrest:
Nor what religion fables of the grave
Fear'd he,—Philosophy's accepted guest.

For none than he a purer heart could have,
Or that loved good more for itself alone;
Of nought in heaven or earth was he the slave.

What sorrow deep, and shadowy, and unknown,
Sent him, a hopeless wanderer, through mankind?—
If with a human sadness he did groan,

He had a gentle yet aspiring mind;
Just, innocent, with varied learning fed,
And such a glorious consolation find

In others' joy, when all their own is dead:
He loved, and labour'd for his kind in grief,
And yet, unlike all others, it is said,

That from such toil he never found relief;
Although a child of fortune and of power,
Of an ancestral name the orphan chief,

His soul had wedded wisdom, and her dower
Is love and justice, clothed in which he sate
Apart from men, as in a lonely tower,

Pitying the tumult of their dark estate—
Yet even in youth did he not e'er abuse
The strength of wealth or thought, to consecrate

Those false opinions which the harsh rich use
To blind the world they famish for their pride;
Nor did he hold from any man his dues,

But like a steward in honest dealings tried
With those who toil'd and wept, the poor and wise
His riches and his cares he did divide.

Fearless he was, and scorning all disguise,
What he dared do or think, though men might start,
He spoke with mild yet unaverted eyes;

Liberal he was of soul, and frank of heart,
And to his many friends—all loved him well—
Whate'er he knew or felt he would impart,

If words he found those inmost thoughts to tell;
If not, he smiled or wept; and his weak foes
He neither spurn'd nor hated, though with fell

And mortal hate their thousand voices rose,
They past like aimless arrows from his ear—
Nor did his heart or mind its portal close

To those, or them, or any whom life's sphere
May comprehend within its wide array.
What sadness made that vernal spirit sere?

He knew not. Though his life, day after day,
Was failing like an unreplenish'd stream,
Though in his eyes a cloud and burthen lay,

Through which his soul, like Vesper's serene beam
Piercing the chasms of ever rising clouds,
Shone, softly burning; though his lips did seem

Like reeds which quiver in impetuous floods;
And through his sleep, and o'er each waking hour,
Thoughts after thoughts, unresting multitudes,

Were driven within him, by some secret power,
Which bade them blaze, and live, and roll afar,
Like lights and sounds, from haunted tower to tower

O'er castled mountains borne, when tempest's war
Is levied by the night-contending winds,
And the pale dalesmen watch with eager ear;—

Though such were in his spirit, as the fiends
Which wake and feed on everliving woe,—
What was this grief, which ne'er in other minds

A mirror found,—he knew not—none could know;
But on whoe'er might question him he turn'd
The light of his frank eyes, as if to show,

He knew not of the grief within that burn'd,
But ask'd forbearance with a mournful look;
Or spoke in words from which none ever learn'd

The cause of his disquietude; or shook
With spasms of silent passion; or turn'd pale:
So that his friends soon rarely undertook

To stir his secret pain without avail;—
For all who knew and loved him then perceived
That there was drawn an adamantine veil

Between his heart and mind,—both unrelieved
Wrought in his brain and bosom separate strife.
Some said that he was mad, others believed

That memories of an antenatal life
Made this, where now he dwelt, a penal hell;
And others said that such mysterious grief

From God's displeasure, like a darkness, fell
On souls like his which own'd no higher law
Than love; love calm, steadfast, invincible

By mortal fear or supernatural awe;
And others,—"'Tis the shadow of a dream
Which the veil'd eye of memory never saw

"But through the soul's abyss, like some dark stream
Through shatter'd mines and caverns underground
Rolls, shaking its foundations; and no beam

"Of joy may rise, but it is quench'd and drown'd
In the dim whirlpools of this dream obscure,
Soon its exhausted waters will have found

"A lair of rest beneath thy spirit pure,
O Athanase!—in one so good and great,
Even our tumult cannot long endure."

So spake they, idly of another's state
Babbling vain words and fond philosophy;
This was their consolation, such debate

Men held with one another; nor did
Like one who labours with a human woe
Decline this talk: as if its theme might be

Another, not himself, he to and fro
Question'd and canvass'd it with subtlest wit,
And none but those who loved him best could know

That which he knew not, how it gall'd and bit
His weary mind, this converse vain and cold;
For like an eyeless night-mare grief did sit

Upon his being; a snake which fold by fold
Press'd out the life of life, a clinging fiend
Which clench'd him, if he stirr'd, with deadlier hold;—
And so his grief remain'd—let it remain—untold.*

* The Author was pursuing a fuller development of the ideal character of Athanase, when it struck him that in an attempt at extreme refinement and analysis, his conceptions might be betrayed into the assuming a morbid character. The reader will judge whether he is a loser or gainer by this difference.—*Author's Note.*

December, 1817.

PART II.

FRAGMENT I.

PRINCE Athanase had one beloved friend,
An old, old man, with hair of silver white,
And lips where heavenly smiles would hang and blend
With his wise words; and eyes whose arrowy light
Shone like the reflex of a thousand minds.
He was the last whom superstition's blight
Had spared in Greece—the blight that cramps and blinds,—
And in his olive bower at Œnoe
Had sate from earliest youth. Like one who finds
A fertile island in the barren sea,
One mariner who has survived his mates
Many a drear month in a great ship—so he
With soul-sustaining songs,—and sweet debates
Of ancient lore, there fed his lonely being:—
"The mind becomes that which it contemplates,"—
And thus Zonoras, by forever seeing
Their bright creations, grew like wisest men;
And when he heard the crash of nations fleeing
A bloodier power than ruled thy ruins then,
O sacred Hellas! many weary years
He wander'd, till the path of Laian's glen
Was grass-grown—and the unremember'd tears
Were dry in Laian for their honour'd chief,
Who fell in Byzant, pierced by Moslem spears:—
And as the lady look'd with faithful grief
From her high lattice o'er the rugged path,
Where she once saw that horseman toil, with brief
And blighting hope, who with the news of death
Struck body and soul as with a mortal blight,
She saw beneath the chestnuts, far beneath,

An old man toiling up, a weary wight;
And soon within her hospitable hall
She saw his white hairs glittering in the light

Of the wood fire, and round his shoulders fall;
And his wan visage and his wither'd mien
Yet calm and [ ] and majestical.

And Athanase, her child, who must have been
Then three years old, sate opposite and gazed.

FRAGMENT II.

SUCH was Zonoras; and as daylight finds
An amaranth glittering on the path of frost,
When autumn nights have nipp'd all weaker kinds,

Thus had his age, dark, cold, and tempest-tost,
Shone truth upon Zonoras; and he fill'd
From fountains pure, nigh overgrown and lost,

The spirit of Prince Athanase, a child,
With soul-sustaining songs of ancient lore
And philosophic wisdom, clear and mild.

And sweet and subtle talk they evermore,
The pupil and [the] master shared; until,
Sharing the undiminishable store,

The youth, as shadows on a grassy hill
Outrun the winds that chase them, soon outran
His teacher, and did teach with native skill

Strange truths and new to that experienced man;
Still they were friends, as few have ever been
Who mark the extremes of life's discordant span.

And in the caverns of the forest green,
Or by the rocks of echoing ocean hoar,
Zonoras and Prince Athanase were seen

By summer woodmen; and when winter's roar
Sounded o'er earth and sea its blast of war,
The Balearic fisher, driven from shore,

Hanging upon the peaked wave afar,
Then saw their lamp from Laian's turret gleam,
Piercing the stormy darkness like a star,

Which pours beyond the sea one steadfast beam,
Whilst all the constellations of the sky
Seem'd wreck'd. They did but seem—

For, lo! the wintry clouds are all gone by,
And bright Arcturus through yon pines is glowing,
And far o'er southern waves, immoveably

Belted Orion hangs—warm light is flowing
From the young moon into the sunset's chasm.—
"O, summer night! with power divine, bestowing

"On thine own bird the sweet enthusiasm
Which overflows in notes of liquid gladness,
Filling the sky like light! How many a spasm

"Of fever'd brains, oppress'd with grief and madness,
Were lull'd by thee, delightful nightingale!
And these soft waves, murmuring a gentle sadness,

"And the far sighings of yon piny dale
Made vocal by some wind, we feel not here,—
I bear alone what nothing may avail

"To lighten—a strange load!"—No human ear
Heard this lament; but o'er the visage wan
Of Athanase, a ruffling atmosphere

Of dark emotion, a swift shadow ran,
Like wind upon some forest-bosom'd lake,
Glassy and dark.—And that divine old man

Beheld his mystic friend's whole being shake,
Even where its inmost depths were gloomiest—
And with a calm and measured voice he spake,

And with a soft and equal pressure, prest
That cold lean hand:—"Dost thou remember yet
When the curved moon then lingering in the west

"Paused in yon waves her mighty horns to wet,
How in those beams we walk'd, half resting on the sea?
'Tis just one year—sure thou dost not forget—

"Then Plato's words of light in thee and me
Linger'd like moonlight in the moonless east
For we had just then read—thy memory

"Is faithful now—the story of the feast;
And Agathon and Diotima seem'd
From death and [ ] released.

FRAGMENT III.

'TWAS at the season when the Earth upsprings
From slumber, as a sphered angel's child,
Shadowing its eyes with green and golden wings,

Stands up before its mother bright and mild,
Of whose soft voice the air expectant seems—
So stood before the sun, which shone and smiled

To see it rise thus joyous from its dreams,
The fresh and radiant Earth. The hoary grove
Wax'd green—and flowers burst forth like starry beams;—

The grass in the warm sun did start and move,
And sea-buds burst under the waves serene:—
How many a one, though none be near to love,

Loves then the shade of his own soul, half seen
In any mirror—or the spring's young minions,
The winged leaves amid the copses green;—

How many a spirit then puts on the pinions
Of fancy, and outstrips the lagging blast,
And his own steps—and over wide dominions

Sweeps in his dream-drawn chariot, far and fast,
More fleet than storms—the wide world shrinks below,
When winter and despondency are past.

'Twas at this season that Prince Athanase
Past the white Alps—those eagle-baffling mountains
Slept in their shrouds of snow;—beside the ways

The waterfalls were voiceless—for their fountains
Were changed to mines of sunless crystal now,
Or by the curdling winds—like brazen wings

Which clanged along the mountain's marble brow,
Warp'd into adamantine fretwork, hung
And fill'd with frozen light the chasm below.

FRAGMENT IV.

THOU art the wine whose drunkenness is all
We can desire, O Love! and happy souls,
Ere from thy vine the leaves of autumn fall,

Catch thee, and feed from their o'erflowing bowls
Thousands who thirst for thy ambrosial dew;—
Thou art the radiance which where ocean rolls

Invest[est] it; and when [the] heavens are blue
Thou fillest them; and when the earth is fair
The shadow of thy moving wings imbue

Its deserts and its mountains, till they wear
Beauty like some bright robe;—thou ever soarest
Among the towers of men, and as soft air

In spring, which moves the unawaken'd forest,
Clothing with leaves its branches bare and bleak,
Thou floatest among men; and aye implorest

That which from thee they should implore:—the weak
Alone kneel to thee, offering up the hearts
The strong have broken—yet where shall any seek

A garment whom thou clothest not?

Marlow, 1817.

ODE TO NAPLES.*

EPODE I. *a.*

I STOOD within the city disinterr'd ;†
And heard the autumnal leaves like light footfalls
Of spirits passing through the streets; and heard
The Mountain's slumberous voice at intervals
Thrill through those roofless halls;
The oracular thunder penetrating shook
The listening soul in my suspended blood;
I felt that Earth out of her deep heart spoke—
I felt, but heard not:—through white columns glow'd
The isle-sustaining Ocean-flood,
A plane of light between two Heavens of azure:
Around me gleam'd many a bright sepulchre
Of whose pure beauty, Time, as if his pleasure
Were to spare Death, had never made erasure;
But every living lineament was clear
As in the sculptor's thought; and there
The wreaths of stony myrtle, ivy and pine,
Like winter leaves o'ergrown by moulded snow,
Seem'd only not to move and grow
Because the crystal silence of the air
Weigh'd on their life; even as the Power divine
Which then lull'd all things, brooded upon mine.

EPODE II. *a.*

Then gentle winds arose
With many a mingled close

* The Author has connected many recollections of his visit to Pompeii and Baiæ with the enthusiasm excited by the intelligence of the proclamation of a Constitutional Government at Naples. This has given a tinge of picturesque and descriptive imagery to the introductory Epodes which depicture these scenes, and some of the majestic feelings permanently connected with the scene of this animating event.—*Author's Note.*

† Pompeii.

Of wild Æolian sound and mountain odour keen ;
And where the Baian ocean
Welters with air-like motion,
Within, above, around its bowers of starry green,
Moving the sea flowers in those purple caves
Even as the ever stormless atmosphere
Floats o'er the Elysian realm,
It bore me like an Angel, o'er the waves
Of sunlight, whose swift pinnace of dewy air
No storm can overwhelm ;
I sail'd, where ever flows
Under the calm Serene
A spirit of deep emotion
From the unknown graves
Of the dead kings of Melody.*
Shadowy Aornos darken'd o'er the helm
The horizontal æther ; heaven stript bare
Its depths over Elysium, where the prow
Made the invisible water white as snow ;
From that Typhæan mount, Inarime
There stream'd a sunlike vapour, like the standard
Of some ethereal host ;
Whilst from all the coast,
Louder and louder, gathering round, there wander'd
Over the oracular woods and divine sea
Prophesyings which grew articulate—
They seize me—I must speak them—be they fate !

STROPHE α. I.

Naples ! thou Heart of men which ever pantest
Naked, beneath the lidless eye of heaven !
Elysian City which to calm enchantest
The mutinous air and sea : they round thee, even
As sleep round Love, are driven !

* Homer and Virgil.

Metropolis of a ruin'd Paradise
  Long lost, late won, and yet but half regain'd!
Bright Altar of the bloodless sacrifice,
  Which armed Victory offers up unstain'd
  To Love, the flower-enchain'd!
Thou which wert once, and then didst cease to be,
Now art, and henceforth ever shalt be, free,
  If Hope, and Truth, and Justice can avail,
        Hail, hail, all hail!

STROPHE *β*. 2.

        Thou youngest giant birth
        Which from the groaning earth
Leap'st, clothed in armour of impenetrable scale!
        Last, of the Intercessors!
        Who 'gainst the Crown'd Transgressors
Pleadest before God's love! Array'd in Wisdom's mail,
        Wave thy lightning lance in mirth
        Nor let thy high heart fail,
Though from their hundred gates the leagued Oppressors,
        With hurried legions move!
        Hail, hail, all hail!

ANTISTROPHE *α*.

What though Cimmerian Anarchs dare blaspheme
  Freedom and thee? thy shield is as a mirror
To make their blind slaves see, and with fierce gleam
  To turn his hungry sword upon the wearer,
        A new Acteon's error
Shall their's have been—devour'd by their own hounds!
  Be thou like the imperial Basilisk
Killing thy foe with unapparent wounds!
  Gaze on oppression, till at that dread risk
  Aghast she pass from the Earth's disk,
Fear not, but gaze—for freemen mightier grow,
And slaves more feeble, gazing on their foe;

If Hope and Truth and Justice may avail,
Thou shalt be great—All hail!

ANTISTROPHE β. 2.

From Freedom's form divine,
From Nature's inmost shrine,
Strip every impious gawd, rend Error veil by veil:
O'er Ruin desolate,
O'er Falsehood's fallen state
Sit thou sublime, unawed; be the Destroyer pale!
And equal laws be thine,
And winged words let sail,
Freighted with truth even from the throne of God:
That wealth, surviving fate,
Be thine.—All hail!

ANTISTROPHE c. γ.

Didst thou not start to hear Spain's thrilling pæan
From land to land re-echo'd solemnly,
Till silence became music? From the Æean*
To the cold Alps, eternal Italy
Starts to hear thine! The Sea
Which paves the desert streets of Venice laughs
In light and music; widow'd Genoa wan
By moonlight spells ancestral epitaphs,
Murmuring, where is Doria? fair Milan,
Within whose veins long ran
The viper's † palsying venom, lifts her heel
To bruise his head. The signal and the seal
(If Hope and Truth and Justice can avail)
Art Thou of all these hopes.—O hail!

* Ææa, the island of Circe.

† The viper was the armorial device of the Visconti, tyrants of Milan.

ANTISTROPHE β. γ.

Florence, beneath the sun,
Of cities fairest one,
Blushes within her bower for Freedom's expectation :
From eyes of quenchless hope
Rome tears the priestly cope,
As ruling once by power, so now by admiration,
An athlete stript to run
From a remoter station
For the high prize lost on Philippi's shore :—
As then Hope, Truth, and Justice did avail,
So now may Fraud and Wrong ! O hail !

EPODE I. β.

Hear ye the march as of the Earth-born Forms
Array'd against the ever-living Gods ?
The crash and darkness of a thousand storms
Bursting their inaccessible abodes
Of crags and thunder-clouds ?
See ye the banners blazon'd to the day,
Inwrought with emblems of barbaric pride ?
Dissonant threats kill Silence far away,
The serene Heaven which wraps our Eden wide
With iron light is dyed,
The Anarchs of the North lead forth their legions
Like Chaos o'er creation, uncreating ;
An hundred tribes nourish'd on strange religions
And lawless slaveries,—down the aerial regions
Of the white Alps, desolating,
Famish'd wolves that bide no waiting,
Blotting the glowing footsteps of old glory,
Trampling our column'd cities into dust,
Their dull and savage lust
On Beauty's corse to sickness satiating—
They come ! The fields they tread look black and hoary
With fire—from their red feet the streams run gory !

EPODE II. β.

Great Spirit, deepest Love!
Which rulest and dost move
All things which live and are, within the Italian shore;
Who spreadest heaven around it,
Whose woods, rocks, waves, surround it;
Who sittest in thy star, o'er Ocean's western floor,
Spirit of beauty! at whose soft command
The sunbeams and the showers distil its foison
From the Earth's bosom chill;
O bid those beams be each a blinding brand
Of lightning! bid those showers be dews of poison!
Bid the Earth's plenty kill!
Bid thy bright Heaven above,
Whilst light and darkness bound it,
Be their tomb who plann'd
To make it ours and thine!
Or, with thine harmonizing ardours fill
And raise thy sons, as o'er the prone horizon
Thy lamp feeds every twilight wave with fire—
Be man's high hope and unextinct desire,
The instrument to work thy will divine!
Then clouds from sunbeams, antelopes from leopards,
And frowns and fears from Thee,
Would not more swiftly flee
Than Celtic wolves from the Ausonian shepherds.—
Whatever, Spirit, from thy starry shrine
Thou yieldest or withholdest, Oh let be
This city of thy worship ever free!

September, 1820.

ON THE MEDUSA OF LEONARDO DA VINCI,

IN THE FLORENTINE GALLERY.

IT lieth, gazing on the midnight sky,
  Upon the cloudy mountain peak supine;
Below, far lands are seen tremblingly;
  Its horror and its beauty are divine.
Upon its lips and eyelids seem to lie
  Loveliness like a shadow, from which shine,
Fiery and lurid, struggling underneath,
The agonies of anguish and of death.

Yet it is less the horror than the grace
  Which turns the gazer's spirit into stone;
Whereon the lineaments of that dead face
  Are graven, till the characters be grown
Into itself, and thought no more can trace;
  'Tis the melodious hue of beauty thrown
Athwart the darkness and the glare of pain,
Which humanize and harmonize the strain.

And from its head as from one body grow,
  As [ ] grass out of a watery rock,
Hairs which are vipers, and they curl and flow
  And their long tangles in each other lock,
And with unending involutions shew
  Their mailed radiance, as it were to mock
The torture and the death within, and saw
The solid air with many a ragged jaw.

And from a stone beside a poisonous eft
  Peeps idly into those Gorgonian eyes;
Whilst in the air a ghastly bat, bereft
  Of sense, has flitted with a mad surprise

Out of the cave this hideous light had cleft,
  And he comes hastening like a moth that hies
After a taper; and the midnight sky
Flares, a light more dread than obscurity.

'Tis the tempestuous loveliness of terror;
  For from the serpents gleams a brazen glare
Kindled by that inextricable error,
  Which makes a thrilling vapour of the air
Become a [ ] and ever-shifting mirror
  Of all the beauty and the terror there—
A woman's countenance, with serpent locks,
Gazing in death on heaven from those wet rocks.

Florence, 1819.

SONG.

RARELY, rarely, comest thou,
  Spirit of Delight!
  Wherefore hast thou left me now
    Many a day and night?
Many a weary night and day
'Tis since thou art fled away.

How shall ever one like me
  Win thee back again?
With the joyous and the free
  Thou wilt scoff at pain.
Spirit false! thou hast forgot
All but those who need thee not.

As a lizard with the shade
  Of a trembling leaf,
Thou with sorrow art dismay'd;
  Even the sighs of grief
Reproach thee, that thou art not near,
And reproach thou wilt not hear.

Let me set my mournful ditty
  To a merry measure,
Thou wilt never come for pity,
  Thou wilt come for pleasure,
Pity then will cut away
Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay.

I love all that thou lovest,
  Spirit of Delight !
The fresh Earth in new leaves drest,
  And the starry night ;
Autumn evening, and the morn
When the golden mists are born.

I love snow, and all the forms
  Of the radiant frost ;
I love waves, and winds, and storms,
  Every thing almost
Which is Nature's, and may be
Untainted by man's misery.

I love tranquil solitude,
  And such society
As is quiet, wise and good ;
  Between thee and me
What difference ? but thou dost possess
The things I seek, not love them less.

I love Love—though he has wings,
  And like light can flee,
But above all other things,
  Spirit, I love thee—
Thou art love and life ! O come,
Make once more my heart thy home.

TO CONSTANTIA,

SINGING.

THUS to be lost and thus to sink and die,
Perchance were death indeed!—Constantia, turn!
In thy dark eyes a power like light doth lie,
Even though the sounds which were thy voice, which burn
Between thy lips, are laid to sleep;
Within thy breath, and on thy hair, like odour it is yet,
And from thy touch like fire doth leap.
Even while I write, my burning cheeks are wet,
Alas, that the torn heart can bleed, but not forget!

A breathless awe, like the swift change
Unseen, but felt in youthful slumbers,
Wild, sweet, but uncommunicably strange,
Thou breathest now in fast ascending numbers.
The cope of heaven seems rent and cloven
By the enchantment of thy strain,
And on my shoulders wings are woven,
To follow its sublime career,
Beyond the mighty moons that wane
Upon the verge of nature's utmost sphere,
'Till the world's shadowy walls are past and disappear.

Her voice is hovering o'er my soul—it lingers
O'ershadowing it with soft and lulling wings,
The blood and life within those snowy fingers
Teach witchcraft to the instrumental strings.
My brain is wild, my breath comes quick—
The blood is listening in my frame,
And thronging shadows, fast and thick,
Fall on my overflowing eyes;
My heart is quivering like a flame;
As morning dew, that in the sunbeam dies,
I am dissolved in these consuming ecstasies.

I have no life, Constantia, now, but thee,
  Whilst, like the world-surrounding air, thy song
Flows on, and fills all things with melody.—
  Now is thy voice a tempest swift and strong,
On which, like one in trance upborne,
  Secure o'er rocks and waves I sweep,
Rejoicing like a cloud of morn.
  Now 'tis the breath of summer night,
Which when the starry waters sleep,
  Round western isles, with incense-blossoms bright,
  Lingering, suspends my soul in its voluptuous flight.

THE FUGITIVES.

I.

THE waters are flashing,
  The white hail is dashing,
  The lightnings are glancing,
The hoar-spray is dancing—
    Away!

The whirlwind is rolling,
The thunder is tolling,
The forest is swinging,
The minster bells ringing—
    Come away!

The Earth is like Ocean,
Wreck-strewn and in motion:
Bird, beast, man and worm
Have crept out of the storm—
    Come away!

II.

"Our boat has one sail,
And the helmsman is pale;—
A bold pilot I trow,
Who should follow us now,"—
Shouted He—

And she cried: "Ply the oar!
Put off gaily from shore!"—
As she spoke, bolts of death
Mix'd with hail, speck'd their path
O'er the sea.

And from isle, tower and rock,
The blue beacon cloud broke,
And though dumb in the blast,
The red cannon flash'd fast
From the lee.

III.

"And, fear'st thou, and fear'st thou?
And, see'st thou, and hear'st thou?
And, drive we not free
O'er the terrible sea,
I and thou?"

One boat-cloak did cover
The loved and the lover—
Their blood beats one measure,
They murmur proud pleasure
Soft and low;—

While around the lash'd Ocean,
Like mountains in motion,
Is withdrawn and uplifted,
Sunk, shatter'd and shifted
To and fro.

IV.

In the court of the fortress
Beside the pale portress,
Like a blood-hound well beaten,
The bridegroom stands, eaten
By shame;

On the topmost watch-turret,
As a death-boding spirit,
Stands the grey tyrant father,
To his voice the mad weather
Seems tame;

And with curses as wild
As e'er clung to child,
He devotes to the blast
The best, loveliest and last
Of his name!

A LAMENT.

SWIFTER far than summer's flight,
Swifter far than youth's delight,
Swifter far than happy night,
Art thou come and gone:
As the earth when leaves are dead,
As the night when sleep is sped,
As the heart when joy is fled,
I am left lone, alone.

The swallow Summer comes again,
The owlet Night resumes her reign,
But the wild swan Youth is fain
To fly with thee, false as thou.

My heart each day desires the morrow,
Sleep itself is turn'd to sorrow,
Vainly would my winter borrow
Sunny leaves from any bough.

Lilies for a bridal bed,
Roses for a matron's head,
Violets for a maiden dead,
Pansies let my flowers be:
On the living grave I bear,
Scatter them without a tear,
Let no friend, however dear,
Waste one hope, one fear for me.

THE PINE FOREST

OF THE CASCINE, NEAR PISA.

DEAREST, best and brightest,
Come away,
To the woods and to the fields!
Dearer than this fairest day,
Which like thee to those in sorrow,
Comes to bid a sweet good-morrow
To the rough year just awake
In its cradle in the brake.

The eldest of the hours of spring,
Into the winter wandering,
Looks upon the leafless wood;
And the banks all bare and rude
Found it seems this halcyon morn,
In February's bosom born,
Bending from heaven, in azure mirth,
Kiss'd the cold forehead of the earth,
And smiled upon the silent sea,
And bade the frozen streams be free;

And waked to music all the fountains,
And breathed upon the rigid mountains,
And made the wintry world appear
Like one on whom thou smilest, dear.

Radiant Sister of the Day,
Awake! arise! and come away!
To the wild woods and the plains,
To the pools where winter rains.
Image all the roof of leaves,
Where the Pine its garland weaves,
Sapless, grey, and ivy dun
Round stones that never kiss the sun,
To the sandhills of the sea,
Where the earliest violets be.

Now the last day of many days,
All beautiful and bright as thou,
The loveliest and the last, is dead,
Rise Memory, and write its praise,
And do thy wonted work and trace
The epitaph of glory fled:
For the Earth hath changed its face,
A frown is on the Heaven's brow.

We wander'd to the Pine Forest
  That skirts the Ocean's foam,
The lightest wind was in its nest,
  The tempest in its home.

The whispering waves were half asleep,
  The clouds were gone to play,
And on the woods, and on the deep,
  The smile of Heaven lay.

It seem'd as if the day were one
  Sent from beyond the skies,
Which shed to earth above the sun
  A light of Paradise.

We paused amid the Pines that stood
  The giants of the waste,
Tortured by storms to shapes as rude,
  With stems like serpents interlaced.

How calm it was—the silence there
  By such a chain was bound,
That even the busy woodpecker
  Made stiller by her sound

The inviolable quietness;
  The breath of peace we drew,
With its soft motion made not less
  The calm that round us grew.

It seem'd that from the remotest seat
  Of the white mountain's waste,
To the bright flower beneath our feet,
  A magic circle traced;—

A spirit interfused around,
  A thinking silent life,
To momentary peace it bound
  Our mortal Nature's strife.—

For still it seem'd the centre of
  The magic circle there,
Was one whose being fill'd with love
  The breathless atmosphere.

Were not the crocuses that grew
  Under that ilex tree,
As beautiful in scent and hue
  As ever fed the bee?

We stood beside the pools that lie
  Under the forest bough,
And each seemèd like a sky
  Gulf'd in a world below;—

A purple firmament of light,
  Which in the dark earth lay,
More boundless than the depth of night,
  And clearer than the day—

In which the massy forests grew,
  As in the upper air,
More perfect both in shape and hue
  Than any waving there.

Like one beloved, the scene had lent
  To the dark water's breast
Its every leaf and lineament
  With that clear truth express'd.

There lay far glades and neighbouring lawn,
  And through the dark green crowd
The white sun twinkling like the dawn
  Under a speckled cloud.

Sweet views, which in our world above
  Can never well be seen,
Were imaged by the water's love
  Of that fair forest green.

And all was interfused beneath
  Within an Elysium air,
An atmosphere without a breath,
  A silence sleeping there.

Until a wandering wind crept by,
  Like an unwelcome thought,
Which from my mind's too faithful eye
  Blots thy bright image out.

For thou art good and dear and kind,
  The forest ever green,
But less of peace in S——'s mind,
  Than calm in waters seen.

February 2, 1822.

TO NIGHT.

SWIFTLY walk over the western wave,
Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty eastern cave,
Where, all the long and lone daylight,
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear,—
Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle grey,
Star-inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of day,
Kiss her until she be wearied out,
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand—
Come, long sought!

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sigh'd for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turn'd to his rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sigh'd for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
Wouldst thou me?
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmur'd like a noon-tide bee,
Shall I nestle near thy side?
Wouldst thou me?—And I replied,
No, not thee!

Death will come when thou art dead,
Soon, too soon—
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, beloved Night—
Swift be thine approaching flight,
Come soon, soon!

EVENING.

PONTE A MARE, PISA.

THE sun is set; the swallows are asleep;
The bats are flitting fast in the grey air;
The slow soft toads out of damp corners creep,
And evening's breath, wandering here and there
Over the quivering surface of the stream,
Wakes not one ripple from its silent dream.

There is no dew on the dry grass to-night,
Nor damp within the shadow of the trees;
The wind is intermitting, dry, and light;
And in the inconstant motion of the breeze
The dust and straws are driven up and down,
And whirl'd about the pavement of the town.

Within the surface of the fleeting river
The wrinkled image of the city lay,
Immovably unquiet, and for ever
It trembles, but it never fades away;
Go to the [ ]
You, being changed, will find it then as now.

The chasm in which the sun has sunk is shut
By darkest barriers of enormous cloud,
Like mountain over mountain huddled—but
Growing and moving upwards in a crowd,
And over it a space of watery blue,
Which the keen evening star is shining through.

THE QUESTION.

I DREAM'D that, as I wander'd by the way,
Bare winter suddenly was changed to spring,
And gentle odours led my steps astray,
Mix'd with a sound of waters murmuring
Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay
Under a copse, and hardly dared to fling
Its green arms round the bosom of the stream,
But kiss'd it and then fled, as thou mightest in dream.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,
Daisies, those pearl'd Arcturi of the earth,
The constellated flower that never sets;
Faint oxlips; tender bluebells, at whose birth
The sod scarce heaved; and that tall flower that wets
Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears,
When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

And in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,
Green cow-bind and the moonlight-colour'd may,
And cherry blossoms, and white cups, whose wine
Was the bright dew yet drain'd not by the day;
And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,
With its dark buds and leaves, wandering astray;
And flowers azure, black and streak'd with gold,
Fairer than any waken'd eyes behold.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge
There grew broad flag-flowers, purple prank'd with white,
And starry river-buds among the sedge,
And floating water-lilies, broad and bright,
Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge
With moonlight beams of their own watery light;
And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep green
As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

Methought that of these visionary flowers
  I made a nosegay, bound in such a way
That the same hues, which in their natural bowers
  Were mingled or opposed, the like array
Kept these imprison'd children of the Hours
  Within my hand,—and then, elate and gay,
I hasten'd to the spot whence I had come,
That I might there present it!—Oh! to whom?

AUTUMN:

A DIRGE.

THE warm sun is failing, the bleak wind is wailing,
  The bare boughs are singing, the pale flowers are [dying,
    And the year
On the earth her death-bed, in a shroud of leaves dead,
    Is lying.
    Come, months, come away,
    From November to May,
    In your saddest array;
    Follow the bier
    Of the dead cold year,
And like dim shadows watch by her sepulchre.

The chill rain is falling, the nipt worm is crawling,
The rivers are swelling, the thunder is knelling
    For the year;
The blithe swallows are flown, and the lizards each gone
    To his dwelling;
    Come, months, come away;
    Put on white, black, and grey,
    Let your light sisters play—
    Ye, follow the bier
    Of the dead cold year,
And make her grave green with tear on tear.

HYMN OF APOLLO.

THE sleepless Hours who watch me as I lie,
Curtain'd with star-enwoven tapestries,
From the broad moonlight of the sky,
Fanning the busy dreams from my dim eyes,—
Waken me when their Mother, the grey Dawn,
Tells them that dreams and that the moon is gone.

Then I arise, and climbing Heaven's blue dome,
I walk over the mountains and the waves,
Leaving my robe upon the ocean foam;
My footsteps pave the clouds with fire; the caves
Are fill'd with my bright presence, and the air
Leaves the green earth to my embraces bare.

The sunbeams are my shafts, with which I kill
Deceit, that loves the night and fears the day;
All men who do or even imagine ill
Fly me, and from the glory of my ray
Good minds and open actions take new might,
Until diminish'd by the reign of night.

I feed the clouds, the rainbows and the flowers
With their ethereal colours; the moon's globe
And the pure stars in their eternal bowers
Are cinctured with my power as with a robe;
Whatever lamps on Earth or Heaven may shine,
Are portions of one power, which is mine.

I stand at noon upon the peak of Heaven,
Then with unwilling steps I wander down
Into the clouds of the Atlantic even;
For grief that I depart they weep and frown:
What look is more delightful than the smile
With which I soothe them from the western isle?

I am the eye with which the Universe
  Beholds itself and knows itself divine;
All harmony of instrument or verse,
  All prophecy, all medicine are mine,
All light of art or nature;—to my song,
Victory and praise in their own right belong.

HYMN OF PAN.

FROM the forests and highlands
  We come, we come;
From the river-girt islands,
  Where loud waves are dumb
    Listening to my sweet pipings.
The wind in the reeds and the rushes,
  The bees on the bells of thyme,
The birds on the myrtle bushes,
  The cicale above in the lime,
And the lizards below in the grass,
Were as silent as ever old Tmolus * was,
    Listening to my sweet pipings.

Liquid Peneus was flowing,
  And all dark Tempe lay
In Pelion's shadow, out-growing
  The light of the dying day,
    Speeded by my sweet pipings.
The Sileni, and Sylvans, and Fauns,
  And the Nymphs of the woods and waves,
To the edge of the moist river-lawns,
  And the brink of the dewy caves,
And all that did then attend and follow
Were silent with love, as you now, Apollo,
    With envy of my sweet pipings.

* This and the former poem were written at the request of a friend, to be inserted in a drama on the subject of Midas. Apollo and Pan contended before Tmolus for the prize in music.

I sang of the dancing stars,
I sang of the dædal Earth,
And of Heaven—and the giant wars,
And Love, and Death, and Birth,—
And then I changed my pipings,—
Singing how down the vale of Menalus
I pursued a maiden and clasp'd a reed:
Gods and men, we are all deluded thus!
It breaks in our bosom and then we bleed:
All wept, as I think both ye now would,
If envy or age had not frozen your blood,
At the sorrow of my sweet pipings.

THE BOAT

ON THE SERCHIO.

OUR boat is asleep in Serchio's stream,
Its sails are folded like thoughts in a dream,
The helm sways idly, hither and thither;
Dominic, the boat-man, has brought the mast,
And the oars and the sails; but 'tis sleeping fast,
Like a beast, unconscious of its tether.

The stars burnt out in the pale blue air,
And the thin white moon lay withering there,
To tower, and cavern, and rift and tree,
The owl and the bat fled drowsily.
Day had kindled the dewy woods,
And the rocks above and the stream below,
And the vapours in their multitudes,
And the Apennine's shroud of summer snow,
And clothed with light of aery gold
The mists in their eastern caves uproll'd,

Day had awaken'd all things that be,
The lark and the thrush and the swallow free,
And the milkmaid's song and the mower's scythe,
And the matin-bell and the mountain bee:
Fire-flies were quench'd on the dewy corn,
Glow-worms went out on the river's brim,
Like lamps which a student forgets to trim:
The beetle forgot to wind his horn,
The crickets were still in the meadow and hill:
Like a flock of rooks at a farmer's gun
Night's dreams and terrors, every one,
Fled from the brains which are their prey,
From the lamp's death to the morning ray:

All rose to do the task He set to each,
Who shaped us to His ends and not our own;
The million rose to learn, and one to teach
What none yet ever knew or can be known;

And many rose
Whose woe was such that fear became desire;—
Melchior and Lionel were not among those;
They from the throng of men had stepp'd aside,
And made their home under the green hill side.
It was that hill, whose intervening brow
Screens Lucca from the Pisan's envious eye,
Which the circumfluous plain waving below,
Like a wide lake of green fertility,
With streams and fields and marshes bare,
Divides from the far Apennines—which lie
Islanded in the immeasurable air.

"What think you, as she lies in her green cove,
Our little sleeping boat is dreaming of?
If morning dreams are true, why I should guess
That she was dreaming of our idleness,
And of the miles of watery way
We should have led her by this time of day?"—

———" Never mind," said Lionel,
" Give care to the winds, they can bear it well
About yon poplar tops ; and see
The white clouds are driving merrily,
And the stars we miss this morn will light
More willingly our return to-night.—
List, my dear fellow, the breeze blows fair ;
How it scatters Dominic's long black hair,
Singing of us, and our lazy motions,
If I can guess a boat's emotions.—"

The chain is loosed, the sails are spread,
The living breath is fresh behind,
As with dews and sunrise fed,
Comes the laughing morning wind ;—
The sails are full, the boat makes head
Against the Serchio's torrent fierce,
Then flags with intermitting course,
And hangs upon the wave, [ ]
Which fervid from its mountain source
Shallow, smooth and strong doth come,—
Swift as fire, tempestuously
It sweeps into the affrighted sea ;
In morning's smile its eddies coil,
Its billows sparkle, toss and boil,
Torturing all its quiet light
Into columns fierce and bright.

The Serchio, twisting forth
Between the marble barriers which it clove
At Ripafratta, leads through the dread chasm
The wave that died the death which lovers love,
Living in what it sought ; as if this spasm
Had not yet past, the toppling mountains cling,
But the clear stream in full enthusiasm
Pours itself on the plain, until wandering,

Down one clear path of effluence crystalline
Sends its clear waves, that they may fling
At Arno's feet tribute of corn and wine,
Then, through the pestilential deserts wild
Of tangled marsh and woods of stunted fir,
It rushes to the Ocean.

July, 1821.

THE ZUCCA.*

I.

SUMMER was dead and Autumn was expiring,
And infant Winter laugh'd upon the land
All cloudlessly and cold;—when I, desiring
More in this world than any understand,
Wept o'er the beauty, which like sea retiring,
Had left the earth bare as the wave-worn sand
Of my poor heart, and o'er the grass and flowers
Pale for the falsehood of the flattering hours.

II.

Summer was dead, but I yet lived to weep
The instability of all but weeping;
And on the earth lull'd in her winter sleep
I woke, and envied her as she was sleeping.
Too happy Earth! over thy face shall creep
The wakening vernal airs, until thou, leaping
From unremember'd dreams, shalt [ ] see
No death divide thy immortality.

III.

I loved—O no, I mean not one of ye,
Or any earthly one, though ye are dear
As human heart to human heart may be;—
I loved, I know not what—but this low sphere

* Pumpkin.

And all that it contains, contains not thee,
  Thou, whom seen nowhere, I feel everywhere,
Dim object of my soul's idolatry.
  Veiled art thou like——

IV.

By Heaven and Earth, from all whose shapes thou flowest,
  Neither to be contain'd, delay'd, or hidden,
Making divine the loftiest and the lowest,
  When for a moment thou art not forbidden
To live within the life which thou bestowest;
  And leaving noblest things vacant and chidden,
Cold as a corpse after the spirit's flight,
Blank as the sun after the birth of night.

V.

In winds, and trees, and streams, and all things common,
  In music and the sweet unconscious tone
Of animals, and voices which are human,
  Meant to express some feelings of their own;
In the soft motions and rare smile of woman,
  In flowers and leaves, and in the fresh grass shown,
Or dying in the autumn, I the most
Adore thee present or lament thee lost.

VI.

And thus I went, lamenting when I saw
  A plant upon the river's margin lie,
Like one who loved beyond his Nature's law,
  And in despair had cast him down to die;
Its leaves which had outlived the frost, the thaw
  Had blighted as a heart which hatred's eye
Can blast not, but which pity kills; the dew
Lay on its spotted leaves like tears too true.

VII.

The Heavens had wept upon it, but the Earth
  Had crush'd it on her unmaternal breast.

* * * * *

VIII.

I bore it to my chamber, and I planted
  It in a vase full of the lightest mould;
The winter beams which out of Heaven slanted
  Fell through the window-panes, disrobed of cold,
Upon its leaves and flowers; the star which panted
  In evening for the Day, whose car has roll'd
Over the horizon's wave, with looks of light
Smiled on it from the threshold of the night.

IX.

The mitigated influences of air
  And light revived the plant, and from it grew
Strong leaves and tendrils, and its flowers fair,
  Full as a cup with the vine's burning dew,
O'erflow'd with golden colours; an atmosphere
  Of vital warmth infolded it anew,
And every impulse sent to every part
The unbeheld pulsations of its heart.

X.

Well might the plant grow beautiful and strong,
  Even if the sun and air had smiled not on it;
For one wept o'er it all the winter long
  Tears pure as Heaven's rain, which fell upon it
Hour after hour; for sounds of softest song
  Mix'd with the stringed melodies that won it
To leave the gentle lips on which it slept,
Had loosed the heart of him who sat and wept.

XI.

Had loosed his heart, and shook the leaves and flowers
  On which he wept, the while the savage storm
Waked by the darkest of December's hours
  Was raving round the chamber hush'd and warm;

The birds were shivering in their leafless bowers,
  The fish were frozen in the pools, the form
Of every summer plant was dead [ ]
Whilst this * * *

January, 1822.

THE TWO SPIRITS.

AN ALLEGORY.

FIRST SPIRIT.

OH thou, who plumed with strong desire
  Would float above the earth, beware!
A Shadow tracks thy flight of fire—
  Night is coming!
Bright are the regions of the air,
  And among the winds and beams
It were delight to wander there—
  Night is coming!

SECOND SPIRIT.

The deathless stars are bright above;
  If I would cross the shade of night,
Within my heart is the lamp of love,
  And that is day!
And the moon will smile with gentle light
  On my golden plumes where'er they move;
The meteors will linger round my flight
  And make night day.

FIRST SPIRIT.

But if the whirlwinds of darkness waken
  Hail and lightning and stormy rain;
See the bounds of the air are shaken—
  Night is coming!

The red swift clouds of the hurricane
  Yon declining sun have overtaken,
The clash of the hail sweeps over the plain—
  Night is coming!

SECOND SPIRIT.

I see the light, and I hear the sound;
  I'll sail on the flood of the tempest dark
With the calm within and the light around
  Which makes night day:
And thou, when the gloom is deep and stark,
  Look from thy dull earth, slumber-bound,
My moon-like flight thou then may'st mark
  On high, far away.

Some say, there is a precipice
  Where one vast pine is frozen to ruin
O'er piles of snow and chasms of ice
  Mid Alpine mountains;
And that the languid storm pursuing
  That winged shape for ever flies
Round those hoar branches, aye renewing
  Its aery fountains.

Some say, when nights are dry and clear,
  And the death dews sleep on the morass,
Sweet whispers are heard by the traveller
  Which makes night day:
And a silver shape like his early love doth pass
  Upborne by her wild and glittering hair,
And when he awakes on the fragrant grass,
  He finds night day.

A FRAGMENT.

THEY were two cousins, almost like to twins,
Except that from the catalogue of sins
Nature had razed their love—which could not be
But by dissevering their nativity.
And so they grew together, like two flowers
Upon one stem, which the same beams and showers
Lull or awaken in their purple prime,
Which the same hand will gather—the same clime
Shake with decay. This fair day smiles to see
All those who love,—and who ever loved like thee,
Fiordispina? Scarcely Cosimo,
Within whose bosom and whose brain now glow
The ardours of a vision which obscure
The very idol of its portraiture;
He faints, dissolved into a sense of love;
But thou art as a planet sphered above,
But thou art Love itself—ruling the motion
Of his subjected spirit—such emotion
Must end in sin or sorrow, if sweet May
Had not brought forth this morn—your wedding day.

A BRIDAL SONG.

THE golden gates of sleep unbar
Where strength and beauty met together,
Kindle their image like a star
In a sea of glassy weather.
Night, with all thy stars look down,—
Darkness, weep thy holiest dew,—
Never smiled the inconstant moon
On a pair so true.
Let eyes not see their own delight;—
Haste, swift Hour, and thy flight
Oft renew.

Fairies, sprites, and angels keep her!
  Holy stars, permit no wrong!
And return to wake the sleeper,
  Dawn,—ere it be long.
Oh joy! oh fear! what will be done
  In the absence of the sun!
        Come along!

THE SUNSET.

THERE late was One within whose subtle being,
  As light and wind within some delicate cloud
  That fades amid the blue noon's burning sky,
Genius and youth contended. None may know
The sweetness of the joy which made his breath
Fail, like the trances of the summer air,
When, with the Lady of his love, who then
First knew the unreserve of mingled being,
He walk'd along the pathway of a field
Which to the east a hoar wood shadow'd o'er,
But to the west was open to the sky.
There now the sun had sunk, but lines of gold
Hung on the ashen clouds, and on the points
Of the far level grass and nodding flowers
And the old dandelion's hoary beard,
And, mingled with the shades of twilight, lay
On the brown massy woods—and in the east
The broad and burning moon lingeringly rose
Between the black trunks of the crowded trees,
While the faint stars were gathering overhead.—
"Is it not strange, Isabel," said the youth,
"I never saw the sun? We will walk here
To-morrow; thou shalt look on it with me."

That night the youth and lady mingled lay
In love and sleep—but when the morning came

The lady found her lover dead and cold.
Let none believe that God in mercy gave
That stroke. The lady died not, nor grew wild,
But year by year lived on—in truth I think
Her gentleness and patience and sad smiles,
And that she did not die, but lived to tend
Her aged father, were a kind of madness,
If madness 'tis to be unlike the world.
For but to see her were to read the tale
Woven by some subtlest bard, to make hard hearts
Dissolve away in wisdom-working grief;—
Her eyelashes were worn away with tears,
Her lips and cheeks were like things dead—so pale;
Her hands were thin, and through their wandering veins
And weak articulations might be seen
Day's ruddy light. The tomb of thy dead self
Which one vex'd ghost inhabits, night and day,
Is all, lost child, that now remains of thee!

"Inheritor of more than earth can give,
Passionless calm and silence unreproved,
Whether the dead find, oh, not sleep! but rest,
And are the uncomplaining things they seem,
Or live, or drop in the deep sea of Love;
Oh, that like thine, mine epitaph were—Peace!"
This was the only moan she ever made.

1816.

GOOD NIGHT.

GOOD night? ah! no; the hour is ill
Which severs those it should unite;
Let us remain together still
Then it will be *good* night.

How can I call the lone night good,
Though thy sweet wishes wing its flight?
Be it not said, thought, understood,
Then it will be *good* night.

To hearts which near each other move
From evening close to morning light,
The night is good; because, my love,
They never *say* good night.

TO-MORROW.

WHERE art thou, beloved, To-morrow?
Whom young and old and strong and weak,
Rich and poor, through joy and sorrow,
Thy sweet smiles we ever seek,—
In thy place—ah! well-a-day!
We find the thing we fled—To-day.

DEATH.

THEY die—the dead return not—Misery
Sits near an open grave and calls them over
A youth with hoary hair and haggard eye—
They are the names of kindred, friend, and lover,
Which he so feebly call'd—they all are gone!
Fond wretch, all dead, those vacant names alone,
This most familiar scene, my pain—
These tombs alone remain.

Misery, my sweetest friend—oh! weep no more!
Thou wilt not be consoled—I wonder not!
For I have seen thee from thy dwelling's door
Watch the calm sunset with them, and this spot

Was even as bright and calm, but transitory,
And now thy hopes are gone, thy hair is hoary;
This most familiar scene, my pain—
These tombs alone remain.

A LAMENT.

OH, world! oh, life! oh, time!
On whose last steps I climb
Trembling at that where I had stood before;
When will return the glory of your prime?
No more—O, never more!

Out of the day and night
A joy has taken flight;
Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar,
Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight
No more—O, never more!

TO E*** V***

MADONNA, wherefore hast thou sent to me
Sweet basil and mignionette?
Embalming love and health, which never yet
In the same wreath might be.
Alas, and they are wet!
Is it with thy kisses or thy tears?
For never rain or dew
Such fragrance drew
From plant or flower—the very doubt endears
My sadness ever new,
The sighs I breathe, the tears I shed for thee.

March, 1821.

TO ———

I FEAR thy kisses, gentle maiden,
Thou needest not fear mine;
My spirit is too deeply laden
Ever to burthen thine.

I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy motion,
Thou needest not fear mine;
Innocent is the heart's devotion
With which I worship thine.

LINES.

WHEN the lamp is shatter'd
The light in the dust lies dead—
When the cloud is scatter'd
The rainbow's glory is shed.
When the lute is broken,
Sweet tones are remember'd not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot.

As music and splendour
Survive not the lamp and the lute,
The heart's echoes render
No song when the spirit is mute:—
No song but sad dirges,
Like the wind through a ruin'd cell,
Or the mournful surges
That ring the dead seaman's knell.

When hearts have once mingled
Love first leaves the well-built nest
The weak one is singled
To endure what it once possest.

O, Love! who bewailest
The frailty of all things here,
Why choose you the frailest
For your cradle, your home and your bier?

Its passions will rock thee
As the storms rock the ravens on high:
Bright reason will mock thee,
Like the sun from a wintry sky.
From thy nest every rafter
Will rot, and thine eagle home
Leave thee naked to laughter,
When leaves fall and cold winds come.

TO WILLIAM SHELLEY.

(With what truth I may say—
Roma! Roma! Roma!
Non è più come era prima!)

MY lost William, thou in whom
Some bright spirit lived, and did
That decaying robe consume
Which its lustre faintly hid,
Here its ashes find a tomb,
But beneath this pyramid
Thou art not—if a thing divine
Like thee can die, thy funeral shrine
Is thy mother's grief and mine.

Where art thou, my gentle child?
Let me think thy spirit feeds,
Within its life intense and mild,
The love of living leaves and weeds,

Among these tombs and ruins wild;—
  Let me think that through low seeds
Of the sweet flowers and sunny grass,
Into their hues and scents may pass
A portion——

June, 1819.

AN ALLEGORY.

A PORTAL as of shadowy adamant
  Stands yawning on the highway of the life
Which we all tread, a cavern huge and gaunt;
  Around it rages an unceasing strife
Of shadows, like the restless clouds that haunt
The gap of some cleft mountain, lifted high
Into the whirlwinds of the upper sky.

And many pass it by with careless tread,
  Not knowing that a shadowy [ ]
Tracks every traveller even to where the dead
  Wait peacefully for their companion new;
But others, by more curious humour led,
  Pause to examine,—these are very few,
And they learn little there, except to know
That shadows follow them where'er they go.

MUTABILITY.

THE flower that smiles to-day
  To-morrow dies;
All that we wish to stay,
  Tempts and then flies;
What is this world's delight?
Lightning that mocks the night,
Brief even as bright.

Virtue, how frail it is!
Friendship too rare!
Love, how it sells poor bliss
For proud despair!
But we, though soon they fall,
Survive their joy and all
Which ours we call.

Whilst skies are blue and bright,
Whilst flowers are gay,
Whilst eyes that change ere night
Make glad the day;
Whilst yet the calm hours creep,
Dream thou—and from thy sleep
Then wake to weep.

FROM THE ARABIC.

AN IMITATION.

MY faint spirit was sitting in the light
Of thy looks, my love;
It panted for thee like the hind at noon
For the brooks, my love.
Thy barb whose hoofs outspeed the tempest's flight
Bore thee far from me;
My heart, for my weak feet were weary soon,
Did companion thee.

Ah! fleeter far than fleetest storm or steed,
Or the death they bear,
The heart which tender thought clothes like a dove
With the wings of care;
In the battle, in the darkness, in the need,
Shall mine cling to thee,
Nor claim one smile for all the comfort, love,
It may bring to thee.

TO ———

ONE word is too often profaned
For me to profane it,
One feeling too falsely disdain'd
For thee to disdain it.
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother,
And Pity from thee more dear,
Than that from another.

I can give not what men call love,
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not,
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?

MUSIC.

I PANT for the music which is divine,
My heart in its thirst is a dying flower;
Pour forth the sound like enchanted wine,
Loosen the notes in a silver shower;
Like a herbless plain, for the gentle rain,
I gasp, I faint, till they wake again.

Let me drink of the spirit of that sweet sound,
More, O more,—I am thirsting yet,
It loosens the serpent which care has bound
Upon my heart to stifle it;
The dissolving strain, through every vein,
Passes into my heart and brain.

As the scent of a violet wither'd up,
  Which grew by the brink of a silver lake;
When the hot noon has drain'd its dewy cup,
  And mist there was none its thirst to slake—
And the violet lay dead while the odour flew
On the wings of the wind o'er the waters blue—

As one who drinks from a charmed cup
  Of foaming, and sparkling and murmuring wine
Whom, a mighty Enchantress filling up,
  Invites to love with her kiss divine.

* * * * *
* * * * *

LINES.

THE cold earth slept below;
  Above the cold sky shone;
    And all around,
  With a chilling sound,
From caves of ice and fields of snow,
The breath of night like death did flow
  Beneath the sinking moon.

The wintry hedge was black,
  The green grass was not seen,
    The birds did rest
    On the bare thorn's breast,
Whose roots, beside the pathway track,
Had bound their folds o'er many a crack
  Which the frost had made between.

Thine eyes glow'd in the glare
  Of the moon's dying light;
    As a fen-fire's beam,
    On a sluggish stream,

Gleams dimly—so the moon shone there,
And it yellow'd the strings of thy tangled hair
That shook in the wind of night.

The moon made thy lips pale, beloved;
The wind made thy bosom chill;
The night did shed
On thy dear head
Its frozen dew, and thou didst lie
Where the bitter breath of the naked sky
Might visit thee at will.

November, 1815.

DEATH.

DEATH is here and death is there,
Death is busy everywhere,
All around, within, beneath,
Above is death—and we are death.

Death has set his mark and seal
On all we are and all we feel,
On all we know and all we fear,
* * * *

First our pleasures die—and then
Our hopes, and then our fears—and when
These are dead, the debt is due,
Dust claims dust—and we die too.

All things that we love and cherish,
Like ourselves must fade and perish,
Such is our rude mortal lot,
Love itself would, did they not.

TO ———

WHEN passion's trance is overpast,
If tenderness and truth could last
Or live, whilst all wild feelings keep
Some mortal slumber, dark and deep,
I should not weep, I should not weep!

It were enough to feel, to see
Thy soft eyes gazing tenderly,
And dream the rest—and burn and be
The secret food of fires unseen,
Couldst thou but be as thou hast been.

After the slumber of the year
The woodland violets re-appear,
All things revive in field or grove,
And sky and sea, but two, which move,
And for all others, life and love.

PASSAGE OF THE APENNINES.

LISTEN, listen, Mary mine,
To the whisper of the Apennine,
It bursts on the roof like the thunder's roar,
Or like the sea on a northern shore,
Heard in its raging ebb and flow
By the captives pent in the cave below.
The Apennine in the light of day
Is a mighty mountain dim and grey,
Which between the earth and sky doth lay;
But when night comes, a chaos dread
On the dim starlight then is spread,
And the Apennine walks abroad with the storm.

May 4th, 1818.

TO MARY ———

OH! Mary dear, that you were here
With your brown eyes bright and clear,
And your sweet voice, like a bird
Singing love to its lone mate
In the ivy bower disconsolate;
Voice the sweetest ever heard!
And your brow more * * *
Than the * * * sky
Of this azure Italy.
Mary dear, come to me soon,
I am not well whilst thou art far;
As sunset to the sphered moon,
As twilight to the western star,
Thou, beloved, art to me.

Oh! Mary dear, that you were here;
The Castle echo whispers "Here!"

Este, September, 1818.

THE PAST.

WILT thou forget the happy hours
Which we buried in Love's sweet bowers,
Heaping over their corpses cold
Blossoms and leaves, instead of mould?
Blossoms which were the joys that fell,
And leaves, the hopes that yet remain.

Forget the dead, the past? O yet
There are ghosts that may take revenge for it,
Memories that make the heart a tomb,
Regrets which glide through the spirit's gloom,
And with ghastly whispers tell
That joy, once lost, is pain.

SONG OF A SPIRIT.

WITHIN the silent centre of the earth
My mansion is; where I lived insphered
From the beginning, and around my sleep
Have woven all the wondrous imagery
Of this dim spot, which mortals call the world;
Infinite depths of unknown elements
Mass'd into one impenetrable mask;
Sheets of immeasurable fire, and veins
Of gold and stone, and adamantine iron.
And as a veil in which I walk through Heaven
I have wrought mountains, seas, and waves, and clouds,
And lastly light, whose interfusion dawns
In the dark space of interstellar air.

LIBERTY.

THE fiery mountains answer each other;
Their thunderings are echo'd from zone to zone;
The tempestuous oceans awake one another,
And the ice-rocks are shaken round winter's zone
When the clarion of the Typhoon is blown.

From a single cloud the lightning flashes,
Whilst a thousand isles are illumined around,
Earthquake is trampling one city to ashes,
An hundred are shuddering and tottering; the sound
Is bellowing underground.

But keener thy gaze than the lightning's glare,
And swifter thy step than the earthquake's tramp;
Thou deafenest the rage of the ocean; thy stare
Makes blind the volcanos; the sun's bright lamp
To thine is a fen-fire damp.

From billow and mountain and exhalation
The sunlight is darted through vapour and blast ;
From spirit to spirit, from nation to nation,
From city to hamlet thy dawning is cast,—
And tyrants and slaves are like shadows of night
In the van of the morning light.

TO ——

MINE eyes were dim with tears unshed ;
Yes, I was firm—thus did not thou ;—
My baffled looks did fear yet dread
To meet thy looks—I could not know
How anxiously they sought to shine
With soothing pity upon mine.

To sit and curb the soul's mute rage
Which preys upon itself alone ;
To curse the life which is the cage
Of fetter'd grief that dares not groan,
Hiding from many a careless eye
The scorned load of agony.

Whilst thou alone, then not regarded,
The [ ] thou alone should be,
To spend years thus, and be rewarded,
As thou, sweet love, requited me
When none were near—Oh ! I did wake
From torture for that moment's sake.

Upon my heart thy accents sweet
Of peace and pity, fell like dew
On flowers half dead ;—thy lips did meet
Mine tremblingly ; thy dark eyes threw
Thy soft persuasion on my brain,
Charming away its dream of pain.

We are not happy, sweet; our state
  Is strange and full of doubt and fear;
More need of words that ills abate;—
  Reserve or censure comenot near
Our sacred friendship, lest there be
No solace left for thou and me.

Gentle and good and mild thou art,
  Nor I can live if thou appear
Aught but thyself, or turn thine heart
  Away from me, or stoop to wear
The mask of scorn, although it be
To hide the love thou feel for me.

THE ISLE.

THERE was a little lawny islet
By anemone and violet,
Like mosaic, paven:
And its roof was flowers and leaves
Which the summer's breath enweaves,
Where nor sun nor showers nor breeze
Pierce the pines and tallest trees,
Each a gem engraven.
Girt by many an azure wave
With which the clouds and mountains pave
A lake's blue chasm.

TO ——

MUSIC, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory—
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heap'd for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

TIME.

UNFATHOMABLE Sea! whose waves are years,
Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep woe
Are brackish with the salt of human tears!
Thou shoreless flood, which in thy ebb and flow
Claspest the limits of mortality!
And sick of prey, yet howling on for more,
Vomit'st thy wrecks on its inhospitable shore,
Treacherous in calm, and terrible in storm,
Who shall put forth on thee,
Unfathomable Sea?

LINES.

THAT time is dead for ever, child,
Drown'd, frozen, dead for ever!
We look on the past
And stare aghast
At the spectres wailing, pale and ghast,
Of hopes which thou and I beguiled
To death on life's dark river.

The stream we gazed on then, roll'd by;
Its waves are unreturning;
But we yet stand
In a lone land,
Like tombs to mark the memory
Of hopes and fears, which fade and flee
In the light of life's dim morning.

November 5th, 1817.

A SONG.

A WIDOW bird sate mourning for her love
Upon a wintry bough;
The frozen wind kept on above,
The freezing stream below.

There was no leaf upon the forest bare,
No flower upon the ground,
And little motion in the air
Except the mill-wheel's sound.

THE WORLD'S WANDERERS.

TELL me, thou star, whose wings of light
Speed thee in thy fiery flight,
In what cavern of the night
Will thy pinions close now?

Tell me, moon, thou pale and grey
Pilgrim of heaven's homeless way,
In what depth of night or day
Seekest thou repose now?

Weary wind, who wanderest
Like the world's rejected guest,
Hast thou still some secret nest
On the tree or billow?

A DIRGE.

ROUGH wind, that moanest loud
Grief too sad for song;
Wild wind, when sullen cloud
Knells all the night long;
Sad storm, whose tears are vain,
Bare woods, whose branches stain,
Deep caves and dreary main,
Wail, for the world's wrong!

LINES.

FAR, far away, O ye
Halcyons of memory,
Seek some far calmer nest
Than this abandon'd breast ;—
No news of your false spring
To my heart's winter bring,
Once having gone, in vain
Ye come again.

Vultures, who build your bowers
High in the Future's towers,
Wither'd hopes on hopes are spread,
Dying joys choked by the dead,
Will serve your beaks for prey
Many a day.

DIRGE FOR THE YEAR.

ORPHAN hours, the year is dead,
Come and sigh, come and weep !
Merry hours, smile instead,
For the year is but asleep.
See, it smiles as it is sleeping,
Mocking your untimely weeping.

As an earthquake rocks a corse
In its coffin in the clay,
So White Winter, that rough nurse,
Rocks the death-cold year to-day ;
Solemn hours ! wait aloud
For your mother in her shroud.

As the wild air stirs and sways
The tree-swung cradle of a child,
So the breath of these rude days
Rocks the year :—be calm and mild,

Trembling hours, she will arise
With new love within her eyes.

January grey is here,
  Like a sexton by her grave;
February bears the bier,
  March with grief doth howl and rave,
And April weeps—but, O, ye hours,
Follow with May's fairest flowers.

January 1st, 1821.

SONNET I.

YE hasten to the dead! What seek ye there,
Ye restless thoughts and busy purposes
Of the idle brain, which the world's livery wear?
Oh thou quick Heart which pantest to possess
All that anticipation feigneth fair!
Thou vainly curious mind which wouldest guess
Whence thou didst come, and whither thou may'st go,
And that which never yet was known would know—
Oh, whither hasten ye that thus ye press
With such swift feet life's green and pleasant path,
Seeking alike from happiness and woe
A refuge in the cavern of grey death?
Oh heart, and mind, and thoughts! What thing do you
Hope to inherit in the grave below?

SONNET II.

POLITICAL GREATNESS.

NOR happiness, nor majesty, nor fame,
Nor peace, nor strength, nor skill in arms or arts,
Shepherd those herds whom tyranny makes tame;
Verse echoes not one beating of their hearts,

History is but the shadow of their shame,
Art veils her glass, or from the pageant starts
As to oblivion their blind millions fleet,
Staining that Heaven with obscene imagery
Of their own likeness. What are numbers knit
By force or custom? Man who man would be,
Must rule the empire of himself; in it
Must be supreme, establishing his throne
On vanquish'd will, quelling the anarchy
Of hopes and fears, being himself alone.

SONNET III.

ALAS! good friend, what profit can you see
In hating such an hateless thing as me?
There is no sport in hate where all the rage
Is on one side. In vain would you assuage
Your frowns upon an unresisting smile,
In which not even contempt lurks, to beguile
Your heart, by some faint sympathy of hate.
O conquer what you cannot satiate!
For to your passion I am far more coy
Than ever yet was coldest maid or boy
In winter noon. Of your antipathy
If I am the Narcissus, you are free
To pine into a sound with hating me.

SONNET IV.

LIFT not the painted veil which those who live
Call Life: though unreal shapes be pictured there,
And it but mimic all we would believe
With colours idly spread:—behind, lurk Fear
And Hope, twin destinies; who ever weave
The shadows, which the world calls substance, there.

I knew one who lifted it—he sought,
For his lost heart was tender, things to love
But found them not, alas! nor was there aught
The world contains, the which he could approve.
Through the unheeding many he did move,
A splendour among shadows, a bright blot
Upon this gloomy scene, a Spirit that strove
For truth, and like the Preacher found it not.

GINEVRA.*

WILD, pale, and wonder-stricken, even as one
Who staggers forth into the air and sun
From the dark chamber of a mortal fever,
Bewilder'd, and incapable, and ever
Fancying strange comments in her dizzy brain
Of usual shapes, till the familiar train
Of objects and of persons pass'd like things
Strange as a dreamer's mad imaginings,
Ginevra from the nuptial altar went;
The vows to which her lips had sworn assent
Rung in her brain still with a jarring din,
Deafening the lost intelligence within.

And so she moved under the bridal veil,
Which made the paleness of her cheek more pale,
And deepen'd the faint crimson of her mouth
And darken'd her dark locks, as moonlight doth,—
And of the gold and jewels glittering there
She scarce felt conscious,—but the weary glare
Lay like a chaos of unwelcome light,
Vexing the sense with gorgeous undelight.

* This fragment is part of a poem which Mr. Shelley intended to write, founded on a story to be found in the first volume of a book entitled "L'Osservatore Fiorentino."—*(Note by Mrs. Shelley.)*

A moonbeam in the shadow of a cloud
Was less heavenly fair—her face was bow'd,
And as she pass'd, the diamonds in her hair
Were mirror'd in the polish'd marble stair
Which led from the cathedral to the street;
And ever as she went her light fair feet
Erased these images.

The bride-maidens who round her thronging came,
Some with a sense of self-rebuke and shame,
Envying the unenviable; and others
Making the joy which should have been another's
Their own by gentle sympathy; and some
Sighing to think of an unhappy home:
Some few admiring what can ever lure
Maidens to leave the heaven serene and pure
Of parents' smiles for life's great cheat; a thing
Better to taste sweet in imagining.

But they are all dispersed—and, lo! she stands
Looking in idle grief on her white hands,
Alone within the garden now her own;
And through the sunny air, with jangling tone,
The music of the merry marriage-bells,
Killing the azure silence, sinks and swells;—
Absorb'd like one within a dream who dreams
That he is dreaming, until slumber seems
A mockery of itself—when suddenly
Antonio stood before her, pale as she.
With agony, with sorrow, and with pride,
He lifted his wan eyes upon the bride,
And said—"Is this thy faith?" and then as one
Whose sleeping face is stricken by the sun
With light like a harsh voice, which bids him rise
And look upon his day of life with eyes
Which weep in vain that they can dream no more,
Ginevra saw her lover, and forbore

To shriek or faint, and check'd the stifling blood
Rushing upon her heart, and unsubdued
Said—"Friend, if earthly violence or ill,
Suspicion, doubt, or the tyrannic will
Of parents, chance, or custom, time or change,
Or circumstance, or terror, or revenge,
Or bewilder'd looks, or words, or evil speech,
With all their stings [ ] can impeach
Our love,—we love not :—if the grave which hides
The victim from the tyrant, and divides
The cheek that whitens from the eyes that dart
Imperious inquisition to the heart
That is another's, could dissever ours,
We love not."—" What, do not the silent hours
Beckon thee to Gherardi's bridal bed ?
Is not that ring "—a pledge, he would have said,
Of broken vows, but she with patient look
The golden circle from her finger took,
And said—" Accept this token of my faith,
The pledge of vows to be absolved by death ;
And I am dead or shall be soon—my knell
Will mix its music with that merry bell,
Does it not sound as if they sweetly said
' We toll a corpse out of the marriage bed ?'
The flowers upon my bridal chamber strewn
Will serve unfaded for my bier—so soon
That even the dying violet will not die
Before Ginevra." The strong fantasy
Had made her accents weaker and more weak,
And quench'd the crimson life upon her cheek,
And glazed her eyes, and spread an atmosphere
Round her, which chill'd the burning noon with fear,
Making her but an image of the thought,
Which, like a prophet or a shadow, brought
News of the terrors of the coming time.
Like an accuser branded with the crime

He would have cast on a beloved friend,
Whose dying eyes reproach not to the end
The pale betrayer—he then with vain repentance
Would share, he cannot now avert, the sentence—
Antonio stood and would have spoken, when
The compound voice of women and of men
Was heard approaching ; he retired, while she
Was led amid the admiring company
Back to the palace,—and her maidens soon
Changed her attire for the afternoon,
And left her at her own request to keep
An hour of quiet and rest :—like one asleep
With open eyes and folded hands she lay,
Pale in the light of the declining day.

Meanwhile the day sinks fast, the sun is set,
And in the lighted hall the guests are met ;
The beautiful look'd lovelier in the light
Of love, and admiration, and delight
Reflected from a thousand hearts and eyes
Kindling a momentary Paradise.
This crowd is safer than the silent wood,
Where love's own doubts disturb the solitude ;
On frozen hearts the fiery rain of wine
Falls, and the dew of music more divine
Tempers the deep emotions of the time
To spirits cradled in a sunny clime :—
How many meet, who never yet have met,
To part too soon, but never to forget.
How many saw the beauty, power and wit
Of looks and words which ne'er enchanted yet ;
But life's familiar veil was now withdrawn,
As the world leaps before an earthquake's dawn,
And unprophetic of the coming hours,
The matin winds from the expanded flowers,
Scatter their hoarded incense, and awaken

The earth, until the dewy sleep is shaken
From every living heart which it possesses,
Through seas and winds, cities and wildernesses,
As if the future and the past were all
Treasured i' the instant;—so Gherardi's hall
Laugh'd in the mirth of its lord's festival,
Till some one ask'd—"Where is the Bride?" And then
A bride's-maid went,—and ere she came again
A silence fell upon the guests—a pause
Of expectation, as when beauty awes
All hearts with its approach, though unbeheld;
Then wonder, and then fear that wonder quell'd;—
For whispers pass'd from mouth to ear which drew
The colour from the hearer's cheeks, and flew
Louder and swifter round the company;
And then Gherardi enter'd with an eye
Of ostentatious trouble, and a crowd
Surrounded him, and some were weeping loud.

They found Ginevra dead! if it be death,
To lie without motion, or pulse, or breath,
With waxen cheeks, and limbs cold, stiff, and white,
And open eyes, whose fix'd and glassy light
Mock'd at the speculation they had own'd.
If it be death, when there is felt around
A smell of clay, a pale and icy glare,
And silence, and a sense that lifts the hair
From the scalp to the ancles, as it were
Corruption from the spirit passing forth,
And giving all it shrouded to the earth,
And leaving as swift lightning in its flight
Ashes, and smoke, and darkness: in our night
Of thought we know thus much of death,—no more
Than the unborn dream of our life before
Their barks are wreck'd on its inhospitable shore.
The marriage feast and its solemnity

Was turn'd to funeral pomp—the company
With heavy hearts and looks, broke up; nor they
Who loved the dead went weeping on their way
Alone, but sorrow mix'd with sad surprise
Loosen'd the springs of pity in all eyes,
On which that form, whose fate they weep in vain,
Will never, thought they, kindle smiles again.
The lamps which half extinguish'd in their haste
Gleam'd few and faint o'er the abandon'd feast,
Shew'd as it were within the vaulted room
A cloud of sorrow hanging, as if gloom
Had pass'd out of men's minds into the air.
Some few yet stood around Gherardi there,
Friends and relations of the dead,—and he,
A loveless man, accepted torpidly
The consolation that he wanted not,
Awe in the place of grief within him wrought.
Their whispers made the solemn silence seem
More still—some wept, [ ]
Some melted into tears without a sob,
And some with hearts that might be heard to throb
Leant on the table, and at intervals
Shudder'd to hear through the deserted halls
And corridors the thrilling shrieks which came
Upon the breeze of night, that shook the flame
Of every torch and taper as it swept
From out the chamber where the women kept;—
Their tears fell on the dear companion cold
Of pleasures now departed; then was knoll'd
The bell of death, and soon the priests arrived,
And finding death their penitent had shrived,
Return'd like ravens from a corpse whereon
A vulture has just feasted to the bone.
And then the mourning women came.—

* * * * * *

THE DIRGE.

Old winter was gone
In his weakness back to the mountains hoar,
And the spring came down
From the planet that hovers upon the shore
Where the sea of sunlight encroaches
On the limits of wintry night;—
If the land, and the air, and the sea
Rejoice not when spring approaches,
We did not rejoice in thee,
Ginevra!
She is still, she is cold
On the bridal couch,
One step to the white death-bed,
And one to the bier,
And one to the charnel—and one, O where?
The dark arrow fled
In the noon.

Ere the sun through heaven once more has roll'd,
The rats in her heart
Will have made their nest,
And the worms be alive in her golden hair,
While the spirit that guides the sun,
Sits throned in his flaming chair,
She shall sleep.

* * * * *

Pisa, 1821.

CHARLES THE FIRST.

FRAGMENTS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Pageant to* [*celebrate*] *the arrival of the Queen.*

A Pursuivant. Place, for the Marshal of the Masque!
First Speaker. What thinkest thou of this quaint masque, which turns,
Like morning from the shadow of the night,
The night to day, and London to a place
Of peace and joy?
Second Speaker. And Hell to Heaven;
Eight years are gone,
And they seem hours, since in this populous street
I trod on grass made green by summer's rain,
For the red plague kept state within that palace
Where now reigns vanity—in nine years more
The roots will be refresh'd with civil blood;
And thank the mercy of insulted Heaven
That sin and wrongs wound as an orphan's cry,
The patience of the great avenger's ear.
Third Speaker (*a youth*). Yet, father, tis a happy sight to see,
Beautiful, innocent, and unforbidden
By God or man;—'tis like the bright procession
Of skiey visions in a solemn dream
From which men wake as from a paradise,
And draw new strength to tread the thorns of life.
If God be good, wherefore should this be evil?
And if this be not evil, dost thou not draw
Unseasonable poison from the flowers
Which bloom so rarely in this barren world?
O, kill these bitter thoughts which make the present
Dark as the future!—

* * * * * *

When avarice and tyranny, vigilant fear,
And open-eyed conspiracy lie sleeping
As on Hell's threshold; and all gentle thoughts
Waken to worship him who giveth joys
With his own gift.

Second Speaker. How young art thou in this old age of time!
How green in this grey world! Canst thou not think
Of change in that low scene, in which thou art
Not a spectator but an actor? [ ]
The day that dawns in fire will die in storms,
Even though the noon be calm. My travel's done;
Before the whirlwind wakes I shall have found
My inn of lasting rest, but thou must still
Be journeying on in this inclement air.

* * * * * *

First Speaker. That
Is the Archbishop.

Second Speaker. Rather say the Pope.
London will be soon his Rome: he walks
As if he trod upon the heads of men.
He looks elate, drunken with blood and gold;—
Beside him moves the Babylonian woman
Invisibly, and with her as with his shadow,
Mitred adulterer! he is join'd in sin,
Which turns Heaven's milk of mercy to revenge.

Another Citizen (*lifting up his eyes*). Good Lord! rain it down upon him. [ ]
Amid her ladies walks the papist queen,
As if her nice feet scorn'd our English earth.
There's old Sir Henry Vane, the Earl of Pembroke,
Lord Essex, and Lord Keeper Coventry,
And others who make base their English breed
By vile participation of their honours
With papists, atheists, tyrants, and apostates.

When lawyers mask 'tis time for honest men
To strip the vizor from their purposes.

* * * * * *

Fourth Speaker (*a pursuivant*). Give place, give place!—
You torch-bearers advance to the great gate,
And then attend the Marshal of the Masque
Into the Royal presence.
Fifth Speaker (*a law student*). What thinkest thou
Of this quaint show of ours, my aged friend?
First Speaker. I will not think but that our country's wounds
May yet be heal'd—The king is just and gracious,
Though wicked counsels now pervert his will:
These once cast off—
Second Speaker. As adders cast their skins
And keep their venom, so kings often change:
Councils and counsellors hang on one another,
Hiding the loathsome [ ]
Like the base patchwork of a leper's rags.
Third Speaker. O, still those dissonant thoughts—List! loud music
Grows on the enchanted air! And see, the torches
Restlessly flashing, and the crowd divided
Like waves before an Admiral's prow.

* * * * *

Another Speaker. Give place—
To the Marshal of the Masque!
Third Speaker. How glorious! See those thronging chariots
Rolling like painted clouds before the wind:
Some are
Like curved shells dyed by the azure depths
Of Indian seas; some like the new-born moon;
And some like cars in which the Romans climb'd
(Canopied by Victory's eagle wings outspread)

The Capitolian—See how gloriously
The mettled horses in the torchlight stir
Their gallant riders, while they check their pride,
Like shapes of some diviner element!

Second Speaker. Ay, there they are—
Nobles, and sons of nobles, patentees,
Monopolists, and stewards of this poor farm,
On whose lean sheep sit the prophetic crows.
Here is the pomp that strips the houseless orphan,
Here is the pride that breaks the desolate heart.
These are the lilies glorious as Solomon,
Who toil not, neither do they spin,—unless
It be the webs they catch poor rogues withal.
Here is the surfeit which to them who earn
The niggard wages of the earth, scarce leaves
The tithe that will support them till they crawl
Back to its cold hard bosom. Here is health
Follow'd by grim disease, glory by shame,
Waste by lame famine, wealth by squalid want,
And England's sin by England's punishment.
And, as the effect pursues the cause foregone,
Lo, giving substance to my words, behold
At once the sign and the thing signified—
A troop of cripples, beggars, and lean outcasts,
Horsed upon stumbling shapes, carted with dung,
Dragg'd for a day from cellars and low cabins
And rotten hiding-holes to point the moral
Of this presentiment, and bring up the rear
Of painted pomp with misery!

Speaker. 'Tis but
The anti-masque, and serves as discords do
In sweetest music. Who would love May flowers
If they succeeded not to Winter's flaw;
Or day unchanged by night; or joy itself
Without the touch of sorrow?

* * * * *

SCENE II.—A CHAMBER IN WHITEHALL.

Enter the KING, QUEEN, LAUD, WENTWORTH, *and* ARCHY.

King. Thanks, gentlemen, I heartily accept
This token of your service: your gay masque
Was perform'd gallantly.
Queen. And, gentlemen,
Call your poor Queen your debtor. Your quaint pageant
Rose on me like the figures of past years,
Treading their still path back to infancy,
More beautiful and mild as they draw nearer
The quiet cradle. I could have almost wept
To think I was in Paris, where these shows
Are well devised—such as I was ere yet
My young heart shared with [ ] the task,
The careful weight of this great monarchy.
There, gentlemen, between the sovereign's pleasure
And that which it regards, no clamour lifts
Its proud interposition.

* * * * *

King. My lord of Canterbury.
Archy. The fool is here.
Laud. I crave permission of your Majesty
To order that this insolent fellow be
Chastised, he mocks the sacred character,
Scoffs at the stake, and—
King. What, my Archy!
He mocks and mimics all he sees and hears,
Yet with a quaint and graceful license—Prithee
For this once do not as Prynne would, were he
Primate of England.
He lives in his own world; and, like a parrot,
Hung in his gilded prison from the window
Of a queen's bower over the public way,
Blasphemes with a bird's mind:—his words, like arrows
Which know no aim beyond the archer's wit,
Strike sometimes what eludes philosophy.

Queen. Go, sirrah, and repent of your offence
Ten minutes in the rain: be it your penance
To bring news how the world goes there.. Poor Archy!
He weaves about himself a world of mirth
Out of this wreck of ours.

Laud. I take with patience, as my master did,
All scoffs permitted from above.

King. My Lord,
Pray overlook these papers. Archy's words
Had wings, but these have talons.

Queen. And the lion
That wears them must be tamed. My dearest lord,
I see the new-born courage in your eye
Arm'd to strike dead the spirit of the time.

* * * * * *

Do thou persist: for, faint but in resolve,
And it were better thou hadst still remain'd
The slave of thine own slaves, who tear like curs
The fugitive, and flee from the pursuer;
And Opportunity, that empty wolf,
Flies at his throat who falls. Subdue thy actions
Even to the disposition of thy purpose,
And be that temper'd as the Ebro's steel;
And banish weak-eyed Mercy to the weak
Whence she will greet thee with a gift of peace,
And not betray thee with a traitor's kiss,
As when she keeps the company of rebels,
Who think that she is fear. This do, lest we
Should fall as from a glorious pinnacle
In a bright dream, and wake as from a dream
Out of our worshipp'd state.

* * * * *

Laud. * * And if this suffice not,
Unleash the sword and fire, that in their thirst
They may lick up that scum of schismatics.
I laugh at those weak rebels who, desiring

What we possess, still prate of christian peace,
As if those dreadful messengers of wrath,
Which play the part of God 'twixt right and wrong,
Should be let loose against the innocent sleep
Of templed cities and the smiling fields,
For some poor argument of policy
Which touches our own profit or our pride,
Where it indeed were christian charity
To turn the cheek even to the smiter's hand:
And when our great Redeemer, when our God
Is scorn'd in his immediate ministers,
They talk of peace!
Such peace as Canaan found, let Scotland now.

* * * * *

Queen. My beloved lord,
Have you not noted that the fool of late
Has lost his careless mirth, and that his words
Sound like the echoes of our saddest fears?
What can it mean? I should be loth to think
Some factious slave had tutor'd him.

King. It partly is,
That our minds piece the vacant intervals
Of his wild words with their own fashioning;
As in the imagery of summer clouds,
Or coals in the winter fire, idlers find
The perfect shadows of their teeming thoughts:
And partly, that the terrors of the time
Are sown by wandering Rumour in all spirits;
And in the lightest and the least, may best
Be seen the current of the coming wind.

Queen. Your brain is overwrought with these deep thoughts;
Come, I will sing to you; let us go try
These airs from Italy,—and you shall see
A cradled miniature of yourself asleep,
Stamp'd on the heart by never-erring love:

Liker than any Vandyke ever made,
A pattern to the unborn age of thee,
Over whose sweet beauty I have wept for joy
A thousand times, and now should weep for sorrow,
Did I not think that after we were dead
Our fortunes would spring high in him, and that
The cares we waste upon our heavy crown
Would make it light and glorious as a wreath
Of heaven's beams for his dear innocent brow.

King. Dear Henrietta!

SCENE III.

HAMPDEN, PYM, CROMWELL, *and the younger* VANE.

Hampden. England, farewell! thou, who hast been my cradle,
Shalt never be my dungeon or my grave!
I held what I inherited in thee,
As pawn for that inheritance of freedom
Which thou hast sold for thy despoiler's smile:—
How can I call thee England, or my country?
Does the wind hold?

Vane. The vanes sit steady
Upon the Abbey towers. The silver lightnings
Of the evening star, spite of the city's smoke,
Tell that the north wind reigns in the upper air.
Mark too that flock of fleecy winged clouds
Sailing athwart St. Margaret's.

Hampden. Hail, fleet herald
Of tempest! that wild pilot who shall guide
Hearts free as his, to realms as pure as thee,
Beyond the shot of tyranny! And thou,
Fair star, whose beam lies on the wide Atlantic,
Athwart its zones of tempest and of calm,
Bright as the path to a beloved home,
O light us to the isles of th' evening land!

Like floating Edens, cradled in the glimmer
Of sunset, through the distant mist of years
Tinged by departing Hope, they gleam! Lone regions,
Where power's poor dupes and victims, yet have never
Propitiated the savage fear of kings
With purest blood of noblest hearts; whose dew
Is yet unstain'd with tears of those who wake
To weep each day the wrongs on which it dawns;
Whose sacred silent air owns yet no echo
Of formal blasphemies; nor impious rites
Wrest man's free worship from the God who loves
Towards the worm, who envies us his love,
Receive thou young [ ] of Paradise,
These exiles from the old and sinful world!
This glorious clime, this firmament, whose lights
Dart mitigated influence through the veil
Of pale blue atmosphere; whose tears keep green
The pavement of this moist all-feeding earth,
This vaporous horizon; whose dim round
Is bastioned by the circumfluous sea,
Repelling invasion from the sacred towers,
Presses upon me like a dungeon's grate,
A low dark roof, a damp and narrow vault:
The mighty universe becomes a cell
Too narrow for the soul that owns no master.
While the loathliest spot
Of this wide prison, England, is a nest
Of cradled peace built on the mountain tops,
To which the eagle-spirits of the free,
Which range through heaven and earth, and scorn the storm
Of time, and gaze upon the light of truth,
Return to brood over the [ ] thoughts
That cannot die, and may not be repell'd.

* * * * * *

MAZENGHI.*

OH ! foster-nurse of man's abandon'd glory,
Since Athens, its great mother, sunk in splendour;
Thou shadowest forth that mighty shape in story,
As ocean its wreck'd fanes, severe yet tender :—
The light-invested angel Poesy
Was drawn from the dim world to welcome thee.

And thou in painting didst transcribe all taught
By loftiest meditations ; marble knew
The sculptor's fearless soul—and as he wrought,
The grace of his own power and freedom grew.
And more than all heroic, just, sublime
Thou wert among the false—was this thy crime ?

Yes ; and on Pisa's marble walls the twine
Of direst weeds hangs garlanded—the snake
Inhabits its wreck'd palaces ;—in thine
A beast of subtler venom now doth make
Its lair, and sits amid their glories overthrown,
And thus thy victim's fate is as thine own.

The sweetest flowers are ever frail and rare,
And love and freedom blossom but to wither ;
And good and ill like vines entangled are,
So that their grapes may oft be pluck'd together ;—
Divide the vintage ere thou drink, then make
Thy heart rejoice for dead Mazenghi's sake.

No record of his crime remains in story,
But if the morning bright as evening shone,
It was some high and holy deed, by glory
Pursued into forgetfulness, which won
From the blind crowd he made secure and free
The patriot's meed, toil, death, and infamy.

* This fragment refers to an event, told in Sismondi's Histoire des Republiques Italiennes, which occurred during the war when Florence finally subdued Pisa, and reduced it to a province. The opening stanzas are addressed to the conquering city.

For when by sound of trumpet was declared
A price upon his life, and there was set
A penalty of blood on all who shared
So much of water with him as might wet
His lips, which speech divided not—he went
Alone, as you may guess, to banishment.

Amid the mountains, like a hunted beast,
He hid himself, and hunger, cold, and toil,
Month after month endured; it was a feast
Whene'er he found those globes of deep red gold
Which in the woods the strawberry-tree doth bear,
Suspended in their emerald atmosphere.

And in the roofless huts of vast morasses,
Deserted by the fever-stricken serf,
All overgrown with reeds and long rank grasses,
And hillocks heap'd of moss-inwoven turf,
And where the huge and speckled aloe made,
Rooted in stones, a broad and pointed shade,

He housed himself. There is a point of strand
Near Vada's tower and town; and on one side
The treacherous marsh divides it from the land,
Shadow'd by pine and ilex forests wide,
And on the other creeps eternally,
Through muddy weeds, the shallow, sullen sea.

Naples, 1818.

THE WOODMAN AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

A WOODMAN whose rough heart was out of tune
(I think such hearts yet never came to good)
Hated to hear, under the stars or moon,

One nightingale in an interfluous wood
Satiate the hungry dark with melody;—
And as a vale is water'd by a flood,

Or as the moonlight fills the open sky
Struggling with darkness—as a tuberose
Peoples some Indian dell with scents which lie

Like clouds above the flower from which they rose,
The singing of that happy nightingale
In this sweet forest, from the golden close

Of evening, till the star of dawn may fail,
Was interfused upon the silentness;
The folded roses and the violets pale

Heard her within their slumbers, the abyss
Of heaven with all its planets; the dull ear
Of the night-cradled earth; the loneliness

Of the circumfluous waters,—every sphere
And every flower and beam and cloud and wave,
And every wind of the mute atmosphere,

And every beast stretch'd in its rugged cave,
And every bird lull'd on its mossy bough,
And every silver moth fresh from the grave,

Which is its cradle—ever from below
Aspiring like one who loves too fair, too far,
To be consumed within the purest glow

Of one serene and unapproached star,
As if it were a lamp of earthly light,
Unconscious, as some human lovers are,

Itself how low, how high beyond all height
The heaven where it would perish!—and every form
That worshipp'd in the temple of the night

Was awed into delight, and by the charm
Girt as with an interminable zone,
Whilst that sweet bird, whose music was a storm

Of sound, shook forth the dull oblivion
Out of their dreams; harmony became love
In every soul but one . . . .

And so this man return'd with axe and saw
At evening close from killing the tall treen,
The soul of whom by nature's gentle law

Was each a wood-nymph, and kept ever green
The pavement and the roof of the wild copse,
Chequering the sunlight of the blue serene

With jagged leaves,—and from the forest tops
Singing the winds to sleep—or weeping oft
Fast showers of aërial water drops

Into their mother's bosom, sweet and soft,
Nature's pure tears which have no bitterness;—
Around the cradles of the birds aloft

They spread themselves into the loveliness
Of fan-like leaves, and over pallid flowers
Hang like moist clouds:—or, where high branches kiss,

Make a green space among the silent bowers,
Like a vast fane in a metropolis,
Surrounded by the columns and the towers

All overwrought with branch-like traceries
In which there is religion—and the mute
Persuasion of unkindled melodies,

Odours and gleams and murmurs, which the lute
Of the blind pilot-spirit of the blast
Stirs as it sails, now grave and now acute,

Wakening the leaves and waves ere it has past
To such brief unison as on the brain
One tone, which never can recur, has cast,

One accent never to return again.

TO THE MOON.

ART thou pale for weariness
Of climbing heaven, and gazing on the earth,
Wandering companionless
Among the stars that have a different birth,—
And ever changing, like a joyless eye
That finds no object worth its constancy?

SONG FOR TASSO.

I LOVED—alas! our life is love;
But when we cease to breathe and move
I do suppose love ceases too.
I thought, but not as now I do,
Keen thoughts and bright of linked lore,
Of all that men had thought before,
And all that nature shows, and more.

And still I love and still I think,
But strangely, for my heart can drink
The dregs of such despair, and live,
And love; [ ]
And if I think, my thoughts come fast,
I mix the present with the past,
And each seems uglier than the last.

Sometimes I see before me flee
A silver spirit's form, like thee,
O Leonora, and I sit
[ ] still watching it,
Till by the grated casement's ledge
It fades, with such a sigh, as sedge
Breathes o'er the breezy streamlet's edge.

THE WANING MOON.

AND like a dying lady, lean and pale,
Who totters forth, wrapt in a gauzy veil,
Out of her chamber, led by the insane
And feeble wanderings of her fading brain,
The moon arose up in the murky earth,
A white and shapeless mass.

EPITAPH.

THESE are two friends whose lives were undivided,
So let their memory be, now they have glided
Under the grave ; let not their bones be parted,
For their two hearts in life were single hearted.

TRANSLATIONS.

HYMN TO MERCURY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF HOMER.

I.

SING, Muse, the son of Maia and of Jove,
The Herald-child, king of Arcadia
And all its pastoral hills, whom in sweet love
Having been interwoven, modest May
Bore Heaven's dread Supreme—an antique grove
Shadow'd the cavern where the lovers lay
In the deep night, unseen by Gods or Men,
And white-arm'd Juno slumber'd sweetly then.

II.

Now, when the joy of Jove had its fulfilling,
And Heaven's tenth moon chronicled her relief,
She gave to light a babe all babes excelling,
A schemer subtle beyond all belief;
A shepherd of thin dreams, a cow-stealing,
A night-watching, and door-waylaying thief,
Who 'mongst the Gods was soon about to thieve
And other glorious actions to achieve.

III.

The babe was born at the first peep of day;
He began playing on the lyre at noon,
And the same evening did he steal away
Apollo's herds ;—the fourth day of the moon
On which him bore the venerable May,
From her immortal limbs he leap'd full soon,
Nor long could in the sacred cradle keep,
But out to seek Apollo's herds would creep.

IV.

Out of the lofty cavern wandering
He found a tortoise, and cried out—"A treasure !"
(For Mercury first made the tortoise sing)
The beast before the portal at his leisure
The flowery herbage was depasturing,
Moving his feet in a deliberate measure
Over the turf. Jove's profitable son
Eyeing him laugh'd, and laughing thus begun :—

V.

"A useful god-send are you to me now,
King of the dance, companion of the feast,
Lovely in all your nature ! Welcome, you
Excellent plaything ! Where, sweet mountain beast,
Got you that speckled shell? Thus much I know,
You must come home with me and be my guest;
You will give joy to me, and I will do
All that is in my power to honour you.

VI.

"Better to be at home than out of door ;—
So come with me, and though it has been said
That you alive defend from magic power,
I know you will sing sweetly when you're dead."

Thus having spoken, the quaint infant bore,
Lifting it from the grass on which it fed,
And grasping it in his delighted hold,
His treasured prize into the cavern old.

VII.

Then scooping with a chisel of grey steel,
He bored the life and soul out of the beast—
Not swifter a swift thought of woe or weal
Darts through the tumult of a human breast
Which thronging cares annoy—not swifter wheel
The flashes of its torture and unrest
Out of the dizzy eyes—than Maia's son
All that he did devise hath featly done.

VIII.

And through the tortoise's hard strong skin
At proper distances small holes he made,
And fasten'd the cut stems of reeds within,
And with a piece of leather overlaid
The open space and fix'd the cubits in,
Fitting the bridge to both, and stretch'd o'er all
Symphonious cords of sheep-gut rhythmical.

IX.

When he had wrought the lovely instrument,
He tried the chords, and made division meet,
Preluding with the plectrum, and there went
Up from beneath his hand a tumult sweet
Of mighty sounds, and from his lips he sent
A strain of unpremeditated wit
Joyous and wild and wanton—such you may
Hear among revellers on a holiday.

X.

He sung how Jove and May of the bright sandal
Dallied in love not quite legitimate ;
And his own birth, still scoffing at the scandal,
And naming his own name, did celebrate ;
His mother's cave and servant maids he plann'd all
In plastic verse, her household stuff and state,
Perennial pot, trippet, and brazen pan,—
But singing, he conceived another plan.

XI.

Seized with a sudden fancy for fresh meat,
He in his sacred crib deposited
The hollow lyre, and from the cavern sweet
Rush'd with great leaps up to the mountain's head,
Revolving in his mind some subtle feat
Of thievish craft, such as a swindler might
Devise in the lone season of dun night.

XII.

Lo ! the great Sun under the ocean's bed has
Driven steeds and chariot—the child meanwhile strode
O'er the Pierian mountains clothed in shadows,
Where the immortal oxen of the God
Are pastured in the flowering unmown meadows,
And safely stall'd in a remote abode—
The archer Argicide, elate and proud,
Drove fifty from the herd, lowing aloud.

XIII.

He drove them wandering o'er the sandy way,
But, being ever mindful of his craft,
Backward and forward drove he them astray,
So that the tracks which seem'd before, were aft ;

His sandals then he threw to the ocean spray,
And for each foot he wrought a kind of raft
Of tamarisk, and tamarisk-like sprigs,
And bound them in a lump with withy twigs.

XIV.

And on his feet he tied these sandals light,
The trail of whose wide leaves might not betray
His track; and then, a self-sufficing wight,
Like a man hastening on some distant way,
He from Piera's mountain bent his flight;
But an old man perceived the infant pass
Down green Onchestus heap'd like beds with grass.

XV.

The old man stood dressing his sunny vine:
"Halloo! old fellow with the crooked shoulder!
You grub those stumps? before they will bear wine
Methinks even you must grow a little older:
Attend, I pray, to this advice of mine,
As you would 'scape what might appall a bolder—
Seeing, see not—and hearing, hear not—and—
If you have understanding—understand."

XVI.

So saying, Hermes roused the oxen vast;
O'er shadowy mountain and resounding dell,
And flower-paven plains, great Hermes past;
Till the black night divine, which favouring fell
Around his steps, grew grey, and morning fast
Waken'd the world to work, and from her cell
Sea-strewn, the Pallantean Moon sublime
Into her watch-tower just began to climb.

XVII.

Now to Alpheus he had driven all
The broad-foreheaded oxen of the Sun;
They came unwearied to the lofty stall
And to the water-troughs which ever run
Through the fresh fields—and when with rush-grass tall,
Lotus and all sweet herbage, every one
Had pastured been, the great God made them move
Towards the stall in a collected drove.

XVIII.

A mighty pile of wood the God then heap'd,
And having soon conceived the mystery
Of fire, from two smooth laurel branches stript
The bark, and rubb'd them in his palms—on high
Suddenly forth the burning vapour leapt,
And the divine child saw delightedly—
Mercury first found out for human weal
Tinder-box, matches, fire-irons, flint and steel.

XIX.

And fine dry logs and roots innumerous
He gather'd in a delve upon the ground—
And kindled them—and instantaneous
The strength of the fierce flame was breathed around:
And whilst the might of glorious Vulcan thus
Wrapt the great pile with glare and roaring sound,
Hermes dragg'd forth two heifers, lowing loud,
Close to the fire—such might was in the God.

XX.

And on the earth upon their backs he threw
The panting beasts, and roll'd them o'er and o'er,
And bored their lives out. Without more ado
He cut up fat and flesh, and down before

The fire, on spits of wood he placed the two,
Toasting their flesh and ribs, and all the gore
Pursed in the bowels; and while this was done
He stretch'd their hides over a craggy stone.

XXI.

We mortals let an ox grow old, and then
Cut it up after long consideration,—
But joyous-minded Hermes from the glen
Drew the fat spoils to the more open station
Of a flat smooth space, and portion'd them; and when
He had by lot assign'd to each a ration
Of the twelve Gods, his mind became aware
Of all the joys which in religion are.

XXII.

For the sweet savour of the roasted meat
Tempted him though immortal. Nathelesse
He check'd his haughty will and did not eat,
Though what it cost him words can scarce express,
And every wish to put such morsels sweet
Down his most sacred throat, he did repress;
But soon within the lofty portall'd stall
He placed the fat and flesh and bones and all.

XXIII.

And every trace of the fresh butchery
And cooking, the God soon made disappear,
As if it all had vanish'd through the sky;
He burn'd the hoofs and horns and head and hair,
The insatiate fire devour'd them hungrily;—
And when he saw that everything was clear,
He quench'd the coals and trampled the black dust,
And in the stream his bloody sandals toss'd.

XXIV.

All night he work'd in the serene moonshine—
But when the light of day was spread abroad
He sought his natal mountain-peaks divine.
On his long wandering, neither man nor god
Had met him, since he kill'd Apollo's kine,
Nor house-dog had bark'd at him on his road;
Now he obliquely through the key-hole past,
Like a thin mist, or an autumnal blast.

XXV.

Right through the temple of the spacious cave
He went with soft light feet—as if his tread
Fell not on earth; no sound their falling gave;
Then to his cradle he crept quick, and spread
The swaddling-clothes about him; and the knave
Lay playing with the covering of the bed
With the left hand about his knees—the right
Held his beloved tortoise-lyre tight.

XXVI.

There he lay innocent as a new-born child,
As gossips say; but though he was a god,
The goddess, his fair mother, unbeguiled
Knew all that he had done being abroad:
"Whence come you, and from what adventure wild,
You cunning rogue, and where have you abode
All the long night, clothed in your impudence?
What have you done since you departed hence?

XXVII.

"Apollo soon will pass within this gate
And bind your tender body in a chain
Inextricably tight, and fast as fate,
Unless you can delude the God again,

Even when within his arms—ah, runagate!
A pretty torment both for gods and men
Your father made when he made you!"—"Dear mother,"
Replied sly Hermes, "Wherefore scold and bother?

XXVIII.

"As if I were like other babes as old,
And understood nothing of what is what;
And cared at all to hear my mother scold.
I in my subtle brain a scheme have got,
Which whilst the sacred stars round Heaven are roll'd
Will profit you and me—nor shall our lot
Be as you counsel, without gifts or food,
To spend our lives in this obscure abode.

XXIX.

"But we will leave this shadow-peopled cave
And live among the Gods, and pass each day
In high communion, sharing what they have
Of profuse wealth and unexhausted prey;
And from the portion which my father gave
To Phœbus, I will snatch my share away,
Which if my father will not—nathelesse I,
Who am the king of robbers, can but try.

XXX.

"And, if Latona's son should find me out,
I'll countermine him by a deeper plan;
I'll pierce the Pythian temple-walls, though stout,
And sack the fane of every thing I can—
Cauldrons and tripods of great worth no doubt,
Each golden cup and polish'd brazen pan,
All the wrought tapestries and garments gay."—
So they together talk'd;—meanwhile the Day

XXXI.

Æthereal-born arose out of the flood
  Of flowing Ocean, bearing light to men.
Apollo past toward the sacred wood,
  Which from the inmost depths of its green glen
Echoes the voice of Neptune,—and there stood
  On the same spot in green Onchestus then
That same old animal, the vine-dresser,
Who was employ'd hedging his vineyard there.

XXXII.

Latona's glorious Son began:—"I pray
  Tell, ancient hedger of Onchestus green,
Whether a drove of kine has past this way,
  All heifers with crook'd horns? for they have been
Stolen from the herd in high Pieria,
  Where a black bull was fed apart, between
Two woody mountains in a neighbouring glen,
And four fierce dogs watch'd there, unanimous as men.

XXXIII.

"And, what is strange, the author of this theft
  Has stolen the fatted heifers every one,
But the four dogs and the black bull are left:—
  Stolen they were last night at set of sun,
Of their soft beds and their sweet food bereft—
  Now tell me, man born ere the world begun,
Have you seen any one pass with the cows?"—
To whom the man of overhanging brows:

XXXIV.

"My friend, it would require no common skill
  Justly to speak of everything I see:
On various purposes of good or ill
  Many pass by my vineyard,—and to me

'Tis difficult to know the invisible
  Thoughts, which in all those many minds may be :—
Thus much alone I certainly can say,
I till'd these vines till the decline of day.

XXXV.

"And then I thought I saw, but dare not speak
  With certainty of such a wondrous thing,
A child, who could not have been born a week,
  Those fair-horn'd cattle closely following,
And in his hand he held a polish'd stick :
  And, as on purpose, he walk'd wavering
From one side to the other of the road,
And with his face opposed the steps he trod."

XXXVI.

Apollo hearing this, past quickly on—
  No winged omen could have shown more clear
That the deceiver was his father's son.
  So the God wraps a purple atmosphere
Around his shoulders, and like fire is gone
  To famous Pylos, seeking his kine there,
And found their track and his, yet hardly cold,
And cried—"What wonder do mine eyes behold!

XXXVII.

"Here are the footsteps of the horned herd
  Turn'd back towards their fields of asphodel ;—
But these! are not the tracks of beast or bird,
  Grey wolf, or bear, or lion of the dell,
Or maned Centaur—sand was never stirr'd
  By man or woman thus! Inexplicable!
Who with unwearied feet could e'er impress
The sand with such enormous vestiges?

XXXVIII.

"That was most strange—but this is stranger still!"
  Thus having said, Phœbus impetuously
Sought high Cyllene's forest-cinctured hill,
  And the deep cavern where dark shadows lie,
And where the ambrosial nymph with happy will
  Bore the Saturnian's love-child, Mercury—
And a delightful odour from the dew
Of the hill pastures, at his coming, flew.

XXXIX.

And Phœbus stoop'd under the craggy roof
  Arch'd over the dark cavern:—Maia's child
Perceived that he came angry, far aloof,
  About the cows of which he had been beguiled,
And over him the fine and fragrant woor
  Of his ambrosial swaddling clothes he piled—
As among fire-brands lies a burning spark
Cover'd, beneath the ashes cold and dark.

XL.

There, like an infant who had suck'd his fill
  And now was newly wash'd and put to bed,
Awake, but courting sleep with weary will,
  And gather'd in a lump, hands, feet, and head,
He lay, and his beloved tortoise still
  He grasp'd and held under his shoulder-blade.
Phœbus the lovely mountain-goddess knew,
Not less her subtle, swindling baby, who

XLI.

Lay swathed in his sly wiles. Round every crook
  Of the ample cavern, for his kine, Apollo
Look'd sharp; and when he saw them not, he took
  The glittering key, and open'd three great hollow

Recesses in the rock—where many a nook
  Was fill'd with the sweet food immortals swallow,
And mighty heaps of silver and of gold
Were piled within—a wonder to behold!

XLII.

And white and silver robes, all overwrought
  With cunning workmanship of tracery sweet—
Except among the Gods there can be nought
  In the wide world to be compared with it.
Latona's offspring, after having sought
  His herds in every corner, thus did greet
Great Hermes :—"Little cradled rogue, declare
Of my illustrious heifers, where they are!

XLIII.

"Speak quickly! or a quarrel between us
  Must rise, and the event will be, that I
Shall hawl you into dismal Tartarus,
  In fiery gloom to dwell eternally;
Nor shall your father nor your mother loose
  The bars of that black dungeon—utterly
You shall be cast out from the light of day,
To rule the ghosts of men, unblest as they."

XLIV.

To whom thus Hermes slily answer'd :—"Son
  Of great Latona, what a speech is this!
Why come you here to ask me what is done
  With the wild oxen which it seems you miss?
I have not seen them, nor from any one
  Have heard a word of the whole business;
If you should promise an immense reward,
I could not tell more than you now have heard.

XLV.

"An ox-stealer should be both tall and strong,
  And I am but a little new-born thing,
Who, yet at least, can think of nothing wrong :—
  My business is to suck, and sleep, and fling
The cradle-clothes about me all day long,—
  Or half asleep, hear my sweet mother sing,
And to be wash'd in water clean and warm,
And hush'd and kiss'd and kept secure from harm.

XLVI.

"O, let not e'er this quarrel be averr'd !
  The astounded Gods would laugh at you, if e'er
You should allege a story so absurd,
  As that a new-born infant forth could fare
Out of his home after a savage herd.
  I was born yesterday—my small feet are
Too tender for the roads so hard and rough :—
And if you think that this is not enough,

XLVII.

"I swear a great oath, by my father's head,
  That I stole not your cows, and that I know
Of no one else, who might, or could, or did.—
  Whatever things cows are, I do not know,
For I have only heard the name."—This said,
  He wink'd as fast as could be, and his brow
Was wrinkled, and a whistle loud gave he,
Like one who hears some strange absurdity.

XLVIII.

Apollo gently smiled and said :—Ay, ay,—
  You cunning little rascal, you will bore
Many a rich man's house, and your array
  Of thieves will lay their siege before his door,

Silent as night, in night; and many a day
  In the wild glens rough shepherds will deplore
That you or yours, having an appetite,
Met with their cattle, comrade of the night!

XLIX.

„And this among the Gods shall be your gift,
  To de consider'd as the lord of those
Who swindle, house-break, sheep-steal, and shop-lift;—
  But now if you would not your last sleep dose;
Crawl out!"—Thus saying, Phœbus did uplift
  The subtle infant in his swaddling clothes,
And in his arms, according to his wont,
A scheme devised the illustrious Argiphont.

L.

* * * * *
* * * *

And sneezed and shudder'd—Phœbus on the grass
  Him threw, and whilst all that he had design'd
He did perform—eager although to pass,
  Apollo darted from his mighty mind
Towards the subtle babe the following scoff:—
"Do not imagine this will get you off,

LI.

"You little swaddled child of Jove and May!"
  And seized him:—"By this omen I shall trace
My noble herds, and you shall lead the way."—
  Cyllenian Hermes from the grassy place,
Like one in earnest haste to get away,
  Rose, and with hands lifted towards his face
Roused both his ears—up from his shoulders drew
His swaddling clothes, and—"What mean you to do

LII.

"With me, you unkind God?"—said Mercury:
"Is it about these cows you tease me so?
I wish the race of cows were perish'd!—I
Stole not your cows—I do not even know
What things cows are. Alas! I well may sigh,
That since I came into this world of woe,
I should have ever heard the name of one—
But I appeal to the Saturnian's throne."

LIII.

Thus Phœbus and the vagrant Mercury
Talk'd without coming to an explanation,
With adverse purpose. As for Phœbus, he
Sought not revenge, but only information,
And Hermes tried with lies and roguery
To cheat Apollo—But when no evasion
Served—for the cunning one his match had found—
He paced on first over the sandy ground.

LIV.

He of the Silver Bow the child of Jove
Follow'd behind, till to their heavenly Sire
Came both his children—beautiful as Love,
And from his equal balance did require
A judgment in the cause wherein they strove.
O'er odorous Olympus and its snows
A murmuring tumult as they came arose,—

LV.

And from the folded depths of the great Hill,
While Hermes and Apollo reverent stood
Before Jove's throne, the indestructible
Immortals rush'd in mighty multitude;

And whilst their seats in order due they fill,
  The lofty Thunderer in a careless mood
To Phœbus said:—"Whence drive you this sweet prey,
This herald-baby, born but yesterday?—

LVI.

"A most important subject, trifler, this
  To lay before the Gods!"—"Nay, father, nay,
When you have understood the business,
  Say not that I alone am fond of prey.
I found this little boy in a recess
  Under Cyllene's mountains far away—
A manifest and most apparent thief,
A scandal-monger beyond all belief.

LVII.

"I never saw his like either in heaven
  Or upon earth for knavery or craft:—
Out of the field my cattle yester-even,
  By the low shore on which the loud sea laugh'd,
He right down to the river-ford had driven;
  And mere astonishment would make you daft
To see the double kind of footsteps strange
He has impress'd wherever he did range.

LVIII.

"The cattle's track on the black dust, full well
  Is evident, as if they went towards
The place from which they came—that asphodel
  Meadow, in which I feed my many herds,—
His steps were most incomprehensible—
  I know not how I can describe in words
Those tracks—he could have gone along the sands
Neither upon his feet nor on his hands;—

LIX.

"He must have had some other stranger mode
  Of moving on: those vestiges immense,
For as I traced them on the sandy road,
  Seem'd like the trail of oak-toppings:—but thence
No mark or track denoting where they trod
  The hard ground gave:—but, working at his fence,
A mortal hedger saw him as he past
To Pylos, with the cows, in fiery haste.

LX.

"I found that in the dark he quietly
  Had sacrificed some cows, and before light
Had thrown the ashes all dispersedly
  About the road—then, still as gloomy night,
Had crept into his cradle, either eye
  Rubbing, and cogitating some new sleight.
No eagle could have seen him as he lay
Hid in his cavern from the peering day.

LXI.

"I tax'd him with the fact, when he averr'd
  Most solemnly that he did neither see
Or even had in any manner heard
  Of my lost cows, whatever things cows be;
Nor could he tell, though offer'd a reward,
  Not even who could tell of them to me."
So speaking, Phœbus sate; and Hermes then
Address'd the Supreme Lord of Gods and Men:—

LXII.

"Great Father, you know clearly beforehand
  That all which I shall say to you is sooth;
I am a most veracious person, and
  Totally unacquainted with untruth.

At sunrise, Phœbus came, but with no band
  Of Gods to bear him witness, in great wrath,
To my abode, seeking his heifers there,
And saying that I must show him where they are,

LXIII.

"Or he would hurl me down the dark abyss.
  I know, that every Apollonian limb
Is clothed with speed and might and manliness,
  As a green bank with flowers—but unlike him
I was born yesterday, and you may guess
  He well knew this when he indulged the whim
Of bullying a poor little new-born thing
That slept, and never thought of cow-driving.

LXIV.

"Am I like a strong fellow who steals kine?
  Believe me, dearest Father, such you are,
This driving of the herds is none of mine;
  Across my threshold did I wander ne'er,
So may I thrive! I reverence the divine
  Sun and the Gods, and I love you, and care
Even for this hard accuser—who must know
I am as innocent as they or you.

LXV.

"I swear by these most gloriously-wrought portals—
  (It is, you will allow, an oath of might)
Through which the multitude of the Immortals
  Pass and repass for ever, day and night,
Devising schemes for the affairs of mortals—
  That I am guiltless; and I will requite,
Although mine enemy be great and strong,
His cruel threat—do thou defend the young!"

LXVI.

So speaking, the Cyllenian Argiphont
  Wink'd, as if now his adversary was fitted :—
And Jupiter according to his wont,
  Laugh'd heartily to hear the subtle-witted
Infant give such a plausible account,
  And every word a lie. But he remitted
Judgment at present—and his exhortation
Was, to compose the affair by arbitration.

LXVII.

And they by mighty Jupiter were bidden
  To go forth with a single purpose both,
Neither the other chiding nor yet chidden :
  And Mercury with innocence and truth
To lead the way, and show where he had hidden
  The mighty heifers.—Hermes, nothing loth,
Obeyed the Ægis-bearer's will—for he
Is able to persuade all easily.

LXVIII.

These lovely children of Heaven's highest Lord
  Hasten'd to Pylos and the pastures wide
And lofty stalls by the Alphean ford,
  Where wealth in the mute night is multiplied
With silent growth. Whilst Hermes drove the herd
  Out of the stony cavern, Phœbus spied
The hides of those the little babe had slain,
Stretch'd on the precipice above the plain.

LXIX.

"How was it possible," then Phœbus said,
  "That you, a little child, born yesterday,
A thing on mother's milk and kisses fed,
  Could two prodigious heifers ever flay?

Even I myself may well hereafter dread
  Your prowess, offspring of Cyllenian May,
When you grow strong and tall."—He spoke, and bound
Stiff withy bands the infant's wrists around.

LXX.

He might as well have bound the oxen wild;
  The withy bands, though starkly interknit,
Fell at the feet of the immortal child,
  Loosen'd by some device of his quick wit.
Phœbus perceived himself again beguiled,
  And stared—while Hermes sought some hole or pit,
Looking askance and winking fast as thought,
Where he might hide himself and not be caught.

LXXI.

Sudden he changed his plan, and with strange skill
  Subdued the strong Latonian, by the might
Of winning music, to his mightier will;
  His left hand held the lyre, and in his right
The plectrum struck the chords—unconquerable
  Up from beneath his hand in circling flight
The gathering music rose—and sweet as Love
The penetrating notes did live and move

LXXII.

Within the heart of great Apollo—he
  Listen'd with all his soul, and laugh'd for pleasure.
Close to his side stood harping fearlessly
  The unabashed boy; and to the measure
Of the sweet lyre, there follow'd loud and free
  His joyous voice; for he unlock'd the treasure
Of his deep song, illustrating the birth
Of the bright Gods and the dark desert Earth;

LXXIII.

And how to the Immortals every one
  A portion was assign'd of all that is;
But chief Mnemosyne did Maia's son
  Clothe in the light of his loud melodies;—
And as each God was born or had begun
  He in their order due and fit degrees
Sung of his birth and being—and did move
Apollo to unutterable love.

LXXIV.

These words were winged with his swift delight:
  "You heifer-stealing schemer, well do you
Deserve that fifty oxen should requite
  Such minstrelsies as I have heard even now.
Comrade of feasts, little contriving wight,
  One of your secrets I would gladly know,
Whether the glorious power you now show forth
Was folded up within you at your birth,

LXXV.

"Or whether mortal taught or God inspired
  The power of unpremeditated song?
Many divinest sounds have I admired,
  The Olympian Gods and mortal men among;
But such a strain of wondrous, strange, untired,
  And soul-awakening music, sweet and strong,
Yet did I never hear except from thee,
Offspring of May, impostor Mercury!

LXXVI.

"What Muse, what skill, what unimagined use,
  What exercise of subtlest art, has given
Thy songs such power?—for those who hear may choose
  From three, the choicest of the gifts of Heaven,

Delight, and love, and sleep,—sweet sleep, whose dews
  Are sweeter than the balmy tears of even :—
And I, who speak this praise, am that Apollo
Whom the Olympian Muses ever follow :

LXXVII.

"And their delight is dance, and the blithe noise
  Of song and overflowing poesy ;
And sweet, even as desire, the liquid voice
  Of pipes, that fills the clear air thrillingly;
But never did my inmost soul rejoice
  In this dear work of youthful revelry,
As now I wonder at thee, son of Jove ;
Thy harpings and thy song are soft as love.

LXXVIII.

"Now since thou hast, although so very small,
  Science of arts so glorious, thus I swear,
And let this cornel javelin, keen and tall,
  Witness between us what I promise here,—
That I will lead thee to the Olympian Hall,
  Honour'd and mighty, with thy mother dear,
And many glorious gifts in joy will give thee,
And even at the end will ne'er deceive thee."

LXXIX.

To whom thus Mercury with prudent speech :—
  "Wisely hast thou enquired of my skill :
I envy thee no thing I know to teach
  Even this day :—for both in word and will
I would be gentle with thee; thou canst reach
  All things in thy wise spirit, and thy sill
Is highest in heaven among the sons of Jove,
Who loves thee in the fulness of his love.

LXXX.

"The Counsellor Supreme has given to thee
  Divinest gifts, out of the amplitude
Of his profuse exhaustless treasury;
  By thee, 'tis said, the depths are understood
Of his far voice; by thee the mystery
  Of all oracular fates,—and the dread mood
Of the diviner is breathed up, even I—
A child—perceive thy might and majesty—

LXXXI.

"Thou canst seek out and compass all that wit
  Can find or teach;—yet since thou wilt, come take
The lyre—be mine the glory giving it—
  Strike the sweet chords, and sing aloud, and wake
Thy joyous pleasure out of many a fit
  Of tranced sound—and with fleet fingers make
Thy liquid-voiced comrade talk with thee,
It can talk measured music eloquently.

LXXXII.

"Then bear it boldly to the revel loud,
  Love-wakening dance, or feast of solemn state,
A joy by night or day—for those endow'd
  With art and wisdom who interrogate
It teaches, babbling in delightful mood
  All things which make the spirit most elate,
Soothing the mind with sweet familiar play,
Chasing the heavy shadows of dismay.

LXXXIII.

"To those who are unskill'd in its sweet tongue,
  Though they should question most impetuously
Its hidden soul, it gossips something wrong—
  Some senseless and impertinent reply.

But thou who art as wise as thou art strong
  Can compass all that thou desirest. I
Present thee with this music-flowing shell,
Knowing thou canst interrogate it well.

LXXXIV.

"And let us two henceforth together feed
  On this green mountain slope and pastoral plain,
The herds in litigation—they will breed
  Quickly enough to recompense our pain,
If to the bulls and cows we take good heed;—
  And thou, though somewhat over fond of gain,
Grudge me not half the profit."—Having spoke,
The shell he proffer'd, and Apollo took.

LXXXV.

And gave him in return the glittering lash,
  Installing him as herdsman;—from the look
Of Mercury then laugh'd a joyous flash.
  And then Apollo with the plectrum strook
The chords, and from beneath his hands a crash
  Of mighty sounds rush'd up, whose music shook
The soul with sweetness, as of an adept
His sweeter voice a just accordance kept.

LXXXVI.

The herd went wandering o'er the divine mead,
  Whilst these most beautiful Sons of Jupiter
Won their swift way up to the snowy head
  Of white Olympus, with the joyous lyre
Soothing their journey; and their father dread
  Gather'd them both into familiar
Affection sweet,—and then, and now, and ever,
Hermes must love Him of the Golden Quiver,

LXXXVII.

To whom he gave the lyre that sweetly sounded,
  Which skilfully he held and play'd thereon.
He piped the while, and far and wide rebounded
  The echo of his pipings; every one
Of the Olympians sat with joy astounded,
  While he conceived another piece of fun,
One of his old tricks—which the God of Day
Perceiving, said:—"I fear thee, Son of May;—

LXXXVIII.

"I fear thee and thy sly cameleon spirit,
  Lest thou should steal my lyre and crooked bow;
This glory and power thou dost from Jove inherit,
  To teach all craft upon the earth below;
Thieves love and worship thee—it is thy merit
  To make all mortal business ebb and flow
By roguery:—now, Hermes, if you dare,
By sacred Styx a mighty oath to swear

LXXXIX.

"That you will never rob me, you will do
  A thing extremely pleasing to my heart."
Then Mercury sware by the Stygian dew,
  That he would never steal his bow or dart,
Or lay his hands on what to him was due,
  Or ever would employ his powerful art
Against his Pythian fane. Then Phœbus swore
There was no God or man whom he loved more.

XC.

"And I will give thee as a good-will token,
  The beautiful wand of wealth and happiness;
A perfect three-leaved rod of gold unbroken,
  Whose magic will thy footsteps ever bless;

And whatsoever by Jove's voice is spoken
  Of earthly or divine from its recess,
It, like a loving soul to thee will speak,
And more than this, do thou forbear to seek.

XCI.

"For, dearest child, the divinations high
  Which thou requirest, 'tis unlawful ever
That thou, or any other deity
  Should understand—and vain were the endeavour;
For they are hidden in Jove's mind, and I
  In trust of them, have sworn that I would never
Betray the counsels of Jove's inmost will
To any God—the oath was terrible.

XCII.

"Then, golden-wanded brother, ask me not
  To speak the fates by Jupiter design'd;
But be it mine to tell their various lot
  To the unnumber'd tribes of human kind.
Let good to these, and ill to those be wrought
  As I dispense—but he who comes consign'd
By voice and wings of perfect augury
To my great shrine, shall find avail in me.

XCIII.

"Him will I not deceive, but will assist;
  But he who comes relying on such birds
As chatter vainly, who would strain and twist
  The purpose of the Gods with idle words,
And deems their knowledge light, he shall have mist
  His road—whilst I among my other hoards
His gifts deposit. Yet, O son of May,
I have another wondrous thing to say.

XCIV.

"There are three Fates, three virgin Sisters, who
  Rejoicing in their wind-outspeeding wings,
Their heads with flour snow'd over white and new,
  Sit in a vale round which Parnassus flings
Its circling skirts—from these I have learn'd true
  Vaticinations of remotest things.
My father cared not. Whilst they search out dooms,
They sit apart and feed on honeycombs.

XCV.

"They, having eaten the fresh honey, grow
  Drunk with divine enthusiasm, and utter
With earnest willingness the truth they know;
  But if deprived of that sweet food, they mutter
All plausible delusions;—these to you
  I give;—if you inquire, they will not stutter;
Delight your own soul with them:—any man
You would instruct, may profit, if he can.

XCVI.

"Take these and the fierce oxen, Maia's child—
  O'er many a horse and toil-enduring mule,
O'er jagged-jawed lions, and the wild
  White-tusked boars, o'er all, by field or pool,
Of cattle which the mighty Mother mild
  Nourishes in her bosom, thou shalt rule—
Thou dost alone the veil of death uplift—
Thou givest not—yet this is a great gift."

XCVII.

Thus king Apollo loved the child of May
  In truth, and Jove covered* them with love and joy.
Hermes with Gods and men even from that day
  Mingled, and wrought the latter much annoy,

* *Query*, crown'd.

And little profit, going far astray
  Through the dun night. Farewell, delightful Boy,
Of Jove and Maia sprung,—never by me,
Nor thou, nor other songs shall unremember'd be.

THE CYCLOPS:

A SATIRIC DRAMA.

Translated from the Greek of Euripides.

SILENUS. CHORUS OF SATYRS. ULYSSES. THE CYCLOPS.

Silenus. OH, Bacchus, what a world of toil, both now
And ere these limbs were overworn with age,
Have I endured for thee! First, when thou fled'st
The mountain-nymphs who nursed thee, driven afar
By the strange madness Juno sent upon thee;
Then in the battle of the sons of Earth,
When I stood foot by foot close to thy side,
No unpropitious fellow-combatant,
And driving through his shield my winged spear,
Slew vast Enceladus. Consider now,
Is it a dream of which I speak to thee?
By Jove it is not, for you have the trophies!
And now I suffer more than all before.
For when I heard that Juno had devised
A tedious voyage for you, I put to sea
With all my children quaint in search of you,
And I myself stood on the beaked prow
And fix'd the naked mast, and all my boys
Leaning upon their oars, with splash and strain
Made white with foam the green and purple sea,—
And so we sought you, king. We were sailing
Near Malea, when an eastern wind arose,
And drove us to this wild Ætnean rock;

The one-eyed children of the Ocean God,
The man-destroying Cyclopses inhabit,
On this wild shore, their solitary caves,
And one of these, named Polypheme, has caught us
To be his slaves; and so, for all delight
Of Bacchic sports, sweet dance and melody,
We keep this lawless giant's wandering flocks.
My sons indeed, on far declivities,
Young things themselves, tend on the youngling sheep,
But I remain to fill the water-casks,
Or sweeping the hard floor, or ministering
Some impious and abominable meal
To the fell Cyclops. I am wearied of it!
And now I must scrape up the litter'd floor
With this great iron rake, so to receive
My absent master and his evening sheep
In a cave neat and clean. Even now I see
My children tending the flocks hitherward.
Ha! what is this? are your Sicinnian measures
Even now the same, as when with dance and song
You brought young Bacchus to Athæa's halls?

* * * * *

CHORUS OF SATYRS.

STROPHE.

Where has he of race divine
Wander'd in the winding rocks?
Here the air is calm and fine
For the father of the flocks;—
Here the grass is soft and sweet,
And the river-eddies meet
In the trough beside the cave,
Bright as in their fountain wave.—
Neither here, nor on the dew
Of the lawny uplands feeding?

Oh, you come !—a stone at you
Will I throw to mend your breeding;—
Get along, you horned thing,
Wild, seditious, rambling !

EPODE.*

An Iacchic melody
To the golden Aphrodite
Will I lift, as erst did I
Seeking her and her delight
With the Mænads, whose white feet
To the music glance and fleet.
Bacchus, O beloved, where,
Shaking wide thy yellow hair,
Wanderest thou alone, afar?
To the one-eyed Cyclops, we,
Who by right thy servants are,
Minister in misery,
In these wretched goat-skins clad,
Far from thy delights and thee.

Sil. Be silent, sons; command the slaves to drive
The gather'd flocks into the rock-roof'd cave.
Cho. Go ! But what needs this serious haste, O father?
Sil. I see a Greek ship's boat upon the coast,
And thence the rowers with some general
Approaching to this cave. About their necks
Hang empty vessels, as they wanted food,
And water-flasks.—O, miserable strangers !
Whence come they, that they know not what and who
My master is, approaching in ill hour
The inhospitable roof of Polypheme,
And the Cyclopian jaw-bone, man-destroying?
Be silent, Satyrs, while I ask and hear
Whence coming, they arrive the Ætnean hill.

* The Antistrophe is omitted.

Ulys. Friends, can you show me some clear water spring,
The remedy of our thirst? Will any one
Furnish with food seamen in want of it?
Ha! what is this? We seem to be arrived
At the blithe court of Bacchus. I observe
This sportive band of Satyrs near the caves.
First let me greet the elder.—Hail!
Sil. Hail thou,
O, Stranger! tell thy country and thy race.
Ulys. The Ithacan Ulysses and the king
Of Cephalonia.
Sil. Oh! I know the man,
Wordy and shrewd, the son of Sisyphus.
Ulys. I am the same, but do not rail upon me.—
Sil. Whence sailing do you come to Sicily?
Ulys. From Ilion, and from the Trojan toils.
Sil. How, touch'd you not at your paternal shore?
Ulys. The strength of tempests bore me here by force.
Sil. The self-same accident occurr'd to me.
Ulys. Were you then driven here by stress of weather?
Sil. Following the Pirates who had kidnapp'd Bacchus.
Ulys. What land is this, and who inhabit it?—
Sil. Ætna, the loftiest peak in Sicily.
Ulys. And are there walls, and tower-surrounded towns?
Sil. There are not;—These lone rocks are bare of men.
Ulys. And who possess the land? the race of beasts?
Sil. Cyclops, who live in caverns, not in houses.
Ulys. Obeying whom? Or is the state popular?
Sil. Shepherds: no one obeys any in aught.
Ulys. How live they? do they sow the corn of Ceres?
Sil. On milk and cheese, and on the flesh of sheep.
Ulys. Have they the Bromian drink from the vine's stream?
Sil. Ah! no; they live in an ungracious land.
Ulys. And are they just to strangers?—hospitable?

Sil. They think the sweetest thing a stranger brings
Is his own flesh.
Ulys. What! do they eat man's flesh?
Sil. No one comes here who is not eaten up.
Ulys. The Cyclops now—Where is he? Not at home?
Sil. Absent on Ætna, hunting with his dogs.
Ulys. Know'st thou what thou must do to aid us hence?
Sil. I know not: we will help you all we can.
Ulys. Provide us food, of which we are in want.
Sil. Here is not anything, as I said, but meat.
Ulys. But meat is a sweet remedy for hunger.
Sil. Cow's milk there is, and store of curdled cheese.
Ulys. Bring out:—I would see all before I bargain.
Sil. But how much gold will you engage to give?
Ulys. I bring no gold, but Bacchic juice.
Sil. O, joy!
'Tis long since these dry lips were wet with wine.
Ulys. Maron, the son of the God, gave it me.
Sil. Whom I have nursed a baby in my arms.
Ulys. The son of Bacchus, for your clearer knowledge.
Sil. Have you it now?—or is it in the ship?
Ulys. Old man, this skin contains it, which you see.
Sil. Why this would hardly be a mouthful for me.
Ulys. Nay, twice as much as you can draw from thence.
Sil. You speak of a fair fountain, sweet to me.
Ulys. Would you first taste of the unmingled wine?
Sil. 'Tis just—tasting invites the purchaser.
Ulys. Here is the cup, together with the skin.
Sil. Pour: that the draught may fillip my remembrance
Ulys. See!
Sil. Papaiapæx! what a sweet smell it has!
Ulys. You see it then?—
Sil. By Jove, no! but I smell it.
Ulys. Taste, that you may not praise it in words only.
Sil. Babai! Great Bacchus calls me forth to dance!
Joy? joy!

Ulys. Did it flow sweetly down your throat?
Sil. So that it tingled to my very nails.
Ulys. And in addition I will give you gold.
Sil. Let gold alone! only unlock the cask.
Ulys. Bring out some cheeses now, or a young goat.
Sil. That will I do, despising any master.
Yes, let me drink one cup, and I will give
All that the Cyclops feed upon their mountains.

* * * * * *

Cho. Ye have taken Troy and laid your hands on Helen?
Ulys. And utterly destroy'd the race of Priam.
Sil. * * * * *
The wanton wretch! she was bewitch'd to see
The many-colour'd anklets and the chain
Of woven gold which girt the neck of Paris,
And so she left that good man Menelaus.
There should be no more women in the world
But such as are reserved for me alone.—
See, here are sheep, and here are goats, Ulysses,
Here are unsparing cheeses of press'd milk;
Take them; depart with what good speed ye may;
First leaving my reward, the Bacchic dew
Of joy-inspiring grapes.
Ulys. Ah me! Alas!
What shall we do? the Cyclops is at hand!
Old man, we perish! whither can we fly?
Sil. Hide yourselves quick within that hollow rock.
Ulys. 'Twere perilous to fly into the net.
Sil. The cavern has recesses numberless;
Hide yourselves quick.
Ulys. That will I never do!
The mighty Troy would be indeed disgraced
If I should fly one man. How many times
Have I withstood, with shield immovable,
Ten thousand Phrygians!—if I needs must die,

Yet will I die with glory ;—if I live,
The praise which I have gain'd will yet remain.
Sil. What, ho ! assistance, comrades, haste assistance!

The CYCLOPS, SILENUS, ULYSSES ; CHORUS.

Cycl. What is this tumult ? Bacchus is not here,
Nor tympanies nor brazen castanets.
How are my young lambs in the cavern ? Milking
Their dams or playing by their sides ? And is
The new cheese press'd into the bull-rush baskets ?
Speak ! I'll beat some of you till you rain tears—
Look up, not downwards when I speak to you.
Sil. See ! I now gape at Jupiter himself,
I stare upon Orion and the stars.
Cycl. Well, is the dinner fitly cook'd and laid ?
Sil. All ready, if your throat is ready too.
Cycl. Are the bowls full of milk besides ?
Sil. O'er-brimming ;
So you may drink a tunful if you will.
Cycl. Is it ewe's milk or cow's milk, or both mix'd ?—
Sil. Both, either ; only pray don't swallow me.
Cycl. By no means.——

* * *

What is this crowd I see beside the stalls ?
Outlaws or thieves ? for near my cavern-home,
I see my young lambs coupled two by two
With willow bands ; mix'd with my cheeses lie
Their implements ; and this old fellow here
Has his bald head broken with stripes.
Sil. Ah me !
I have been beaten till I burn with fever.
Cycl. By whom ? Who laid his fist upon your head ?
Sil. Those men, because I would not suffer them
To steal your goods.
Cycl. Did not the rascals know
I am a God, sprung from the race of heaven ?

Sil. I told them so, but they bore off your things,
And ate the cheese in spite of all I said,
And carried out the lambs—and said, moreover,
They'd pin you down with a three-cubit collar,
And pull your vitals out through your one eye,
Torture your back with stripes, then binding you,
Throw you as ballast into the ship's hold,
And then deliver you, a slave, to move
Enormous rocks, or found a vestibule.

Cycl. In truth? Nay, haste, and place in order quickly
The cooking knives, and heap upon the hearth,
And kindle it, a great faggot of wood—
As soon as they are slaughter'd, they shall fill
My belly, broiling warm from the live coals,
Or boil'd and seethed within the bubbling cauldron.
I am quite sick of the wild mountain game,
Of stags and lions I have gorged enough,
And I grow hungry for the flesh of men.

Sil. Nay, master, something new is very pleasant
After one thing for ever, and of late
Very few strangers have approach'd our cave.

Ulys. Hear, Cyclops, a plain tale on the other side.
We, wanting to buy food, came from our ship
Into the neighbourhood of your cave, and here
This old Silenus gave us in exchange
These lambs for wine, the which he took and drank,
And all by mutual compact, without force.
There is no word of truth in what he says,
For slily he was selling all your store.

Sil. I? May you perish, wretch—

Ulys. If I speak false!

Sil. Cyclops, I swear by Neptune who begot thee,
By mighty Triton and by Nereus old,
Calypso and the glaucous ocean Nymphs,
The sacred waves and all the race of fishes—
Be these the witnesses, my dear sweet master,

My darling little Cyclops, that I never
Gave any of your stores to these false strangers;
If I speak false may those whom most I love,
My children, perish wretchedly!
Cho. There stop!
I saw him giving these things to the strangers.
If I speak false, then may my father perish,
But do not thou wrong hospitality.
Cycl. You lie! I swear that he is juster far
Than Rhadamanthus—I trust more in him.
But let me ask, whence have ye sail'd, O strangers?
Who are you? And what city nourish'd ye?
Ulys. Our race is Ithacan—having destroy'd
The town of Troy, the tempests of the sea
Have driven us on thy land, O Polypheme.
Cycl. What, have ye shared in the unenvied spoil
Of the false Helen, near Scamander's stream?
Ulys. The same, having endured a woful toil.
Cycl. O, basest expedition! sail'd ye not
From Greece to Phrygia for one woman's sake?
Ulys. 'Twas the God's work—no mortal was in fault.
But, O great offspring of the ocean-king,
We pray thee and admonish thee with freedom,
That thou dost spare thy friends who visit thee,
And place no impious food within thy jaws.
For in the depths of Greece we have uprear'd
Temples to thy great father, which are all
His homes. The sacred bay of Tænarus
Remains inviolate, and each dim recess
Scoop'd high on the Malean promontory,
And aery Sunium's silver-veined crag,
Which divine Pallas keeps unprofaned ever,
The Gerastian asylums, and whate'er
Within wide Greece our enterprise has kept
From Phrygian contumely; and in which
You have a common care, for you inhabit

The skirts of Grecian land, under the roots
Of Ætna and its crags, spotted with fire.
Turn then to converse under human laws,
Receive us shipwreck'd suppliants, and provide
Food, clothes, and fire, and hospitable gifts;
Nor fixing upon oxen-piercing spits
Our limbs, so fill your belly and your jaws.
Priam's wide land has widow'd Greece enough;
And weapon-winged murder heap'd together
Enough of dead, and wives are husbandless,
And ancient women and grey fathers wail
Their childless age;—if you should roast the rest,
And 'tis a bitter feast that you prepare,
Where then would any turn? Yet be persuaded;
Forego the lust of your jaw-bone; prefer
Pious humanity to wicked will:
Many have bought too dear their evil joys.

Sil. Let me advise you, do not spare a morsel
Of all his flesh. If you should eat his tongue
You would become most eloquent, O Cyclops?

Cycl. Wealth, my good fellow, is the wise man's God,
All other things are a pretence and boast.
What are my father's ocean promontories,
The sacred rocks whereon he dwells, to me?
Stranger, I laugh to scorn Jove's thunderbolt,
I know not that his strength is more than mine.
As to the rest I care not:—When he pours
Rain from above, I have a close pavilion
Under this rock, in which I lie supine,
Feasting on a roast calf or some wild beast,
And drinking pans of milk, and gloriously
Emulating the thunder of high heaven.
And when the Thracian wind pours down the snow,
I wrap my body in the skins of beasts,
Kindle a fire, and bid the snow whirl on.
The earth, by force, whether it will or no,

Bringing forth grass, fattens my flocks and herds,
Which, to what other God but to myself
And this great belly, first of deities,
Should I be bound to sacrifice? I well know
The wise man's only Jupiter is this,
To eat and drink during his little day,
And give himself no care. And as for those
Who complicate with laws the life of man,
I freely give them tears for their reward.
I will not cheat my soul of its delight,
Or hesitate in dining upon you :—
And that I may be quit of all demands,
These are my hospitable gifts ;—fierce fire
And yon ancestral cauldron, which o'er-bubbling
Shall finely cook your miserable flesh.
Creep in !—

* * * * * *

Ulys. Ay! ay! I have escaped the Trojan toils,
I have escaped the sea, and now I fall
Under the cruel grasp of one impious man.
O Pallas, mistress, Goddess, sprung from Jove,
Now, now, assist me! Mightier toils than Troy
Are these ;—I totter on the chasms of peril ;—
And thou who inhabitest the thrones
Of the bright stars, look, hospitable Jove,
Upon this outrage of thy deity,
Otherwise be consider'd as no God!

Cho (*alone*). For your gaping gulf, and your gullet wide
The ravine is ready on every side,
The limbs of the strangers are cook'd and done,
There is boil'd meat, and roast meat, and meat from the coal,
You may chop it, and tear it, and gnash it for fun,
An hairy goat's-skin contains the whole.
Let me but escape, and ferry me o'er
The stream of your wrath to a safer shore.

The Cyclops Ætnean is cruel and bold,
He murders the strangers
That sit on his hearth,
And dreads no avengers
To rise from the earth.
He roasts the men before they are cold,
He snatches them broiling from the coal,
And from the cauldron pulls them whole,
And minces their flesh and gnaws their bone
With his cursed teeth, till all be gone.

Farewell, foul pavilion!
Farewell, rites of dread!
The Cyclops vermilion,
With slaughter uncloying,
Now feasts on the dead,
In the flesh of strangers joying!

Ulys. O Jupiter! I saw within the cave
Horrible things; deeds to be feign'd in words,
But not believed as being done.
Chorus. What! sawest thou the impious Polypheme
Feasting upon your loved companions now?
Ulys. Selecting two, the plumpest of the crowd,
He grasp'd them in his hands.—
Chorus. Unhappy man!

* * * * * *

Ulys. Soon as we came into this craggy place,
Kindling a fire, he cast on the broad hearth
The knotty limbs of an enormous oak,
Three waggon-loads at least, and then he strew'd
Upon the ground, beside the red fire-light,
His couch of pine leaves; and he milk'd the cows,
And pouring forth the white milk, fill'd a bowl
Three cubits wide and four in depth, as much
As would contain four amphoræ, and bound it
With ivy wreaths; then placed upon the fire

A brazen pot to boil, and made red hot
The points of spits, not sharpen'd with the sickle,
But with a fruit tree bough, and with the jaws
Of axes for Ætnean slaughterings.*
And when this God-abandon'd cook of hell
Had made all ready, he seized two of us
And kill'd them in a kind of measured manner;
For he flung one against the brazen rivets
Of the huge cauldron, and seized the other
By the foot's tendon, and knock'd out his brains
Upon the sharp edge of the craggy stone:
Then peel'd his flesh with a great cooking-knife
And put him down to roast. The other's limbs
He chopp'd into the cauldron to be boil'd.
And I, with the tears raining from my eyes,
Stood near the Cyclops, ministering to him;
The rest, in the recesses of the cave,
Clung to the rock like bats, bloodless with fear.
When he was fill'd with my companions' flesh,
He threw himself upon the ground and sent
A loathsome exhalation from his maw.
Then a divine thought came to me. I fill'd
The cup of Maron, and I offered him
To taste, and said:—"Child of the Ocean God,
Behold what drink the vines of Greece produce,
The exultation and the joy of Bacchus."
He, satiated with his unnatural food,
Received it, and at one draught drank it off,
And taking my hand, praised me:—"Thou hast given
A sweet draught after a sweet meal, dear guest."
And I perceiving that it pleased him, fill'd
Another cup, well knowing that the wine
Would wound him soon and take a sure revenge.
And the charm fascinated him, and I

* I confess I do not understand this.—*Note of the Translator.*

Plied him cup after cup, until the drink
Had warm'd his entrails, and he sang aloud
In concert with my wailing fellow-seamen
A hideous discord—and the cavern rung.
I have stolen out, so that if you will
You may achieve my safety and your own.
But say, do you desire, or not, to fly
This uncompanionable man, and dwell
As was your wont among the Grecian Nymphs
Within the fanes of your beloved God?
Your father there within agrees to it,
But he is weak and overcome with wine,
And caught as if with bird-lime by the cup,
He claps his wings and crows in doting joy.
You who are young escape with me, and find
Bacchus your ancient friend; unsuited he
To this rude Cyclops.

Cho. Oh my dearest friend,
That I could see that day, and leave for ever
The impious Cyclops.

* * * *

Ulys. Listen then what a punishment I have
For this fell monster, how secure a flight
From your hard servitude.

Cho. Oh sweeter far
Than is the music of an Asian lyre
Would be the news of Polypheme destroy'd.

Ulys. Delighted with the Bacchic drink he goes
To call his brother Cyclops—who inhabit
A village upon Ætna not far off.

Cho. I understand, catching him when alone
You think by some measure to dispatch him,
Or thrust him from the precipice.

Ulys. Oh no;
Nothing of that kind; my device is subtle.

Cho. How then? I heard of old that thou wert wise.

Ulys. I will dissuade him from this plan, by saying
It were unwise to give the Cyclopses
This precious drink, which if enjoy'd alone
Would make life sweeter for a longer time.
When, vanquish'd by the Bacchic power, he sleeps,
There is a trunk of olive wood within,
Whose point having made sharp with this good swon
I will conceal in fire, and when I see
It is alight, will fix it, burning yet,
Within the socket of the Cyclops' eye
And melt it out with fire—as when a man
Turns by its handle a great auger round,
Fitting the framework of a ship with beams,
So will I, in the Cyclops' fiery eye
Turn round the brand and dry the pupil up.

Cho. Joy! I am mad with joy at your device.

Ulys. And then with you, my friends, and the old man
We'll load the hollow depth of our black ship,
And row with double strokes from this dread shore.

Cho. May I, as in libations to a God,
Share in the blinding him with the red brand?
I would have some communion in his death.

Ulys. Doubtless: the brand is a great brand to hold.

Cho. Oh! I would lift an hundred waggon-loads,
If like a wasp's nest I could scoop the eye out
Of the detested Cyclops.

Ulys. Silence now!
Ye know the close device—and when I call,
Look ye obey the masters of the craft.
I will not save myself and leave behind
My comrades in the cave: I might escape,
Having got clear from the obscure recess,
But 'twere unjust to leave in jeopardy
The dear companions who sail'd here with me.

Cho. Come! who is first, that with his hand
Will urge down the burning brand

Through the lids, and quench and pierce
The Cyclops' eye so fiery fierce?

SEMI-CHORUS I.—*Song within.*

Listen! listen! he is coming,
A most hideous discord humming.
Drunken, museless, awkward, yelling,
Far along his rocky dwelling;
Let us with some comic spell
Teach the yet unteachable.
By all means he must be blinded,
If my council be but minded.

Semi-Cho. II. Happy those made odorous
With the dew which sweet grapes weep,
To the village hastening thus,
Seek the vines that soothe to sleep,
Having first embraced thy friend,
There in luxury without end,
With the strings of yellow hair,
Of thy voluptuous leman fair,
Shalt sit playing on a bed!—
Speak what door is opened?

Cycl. Ha! ha! ha! I'm full of wine,
Heavy with the joy divine,
With the young feast oversated,
Like a merchant's vessel freighted
To the water's edge, my crop
Is laden to the gullet's top.
The fresh meadow-grass of spring
Tempts me forth thus wandering
To my brothers on the mountains,
Who shall share the wine's sweet fountains,
Bring the cask, O stranger, bring!

Cho. One with eyes the fairest
Cometh from his dwelling;
Some one loves thee, rarest,
Bright beyond my telling.

In thy grace thou shinest
Like some nymph divinest,
In her caverns dewy:—
All delights pursue thee,
Soon pied flowers, sweet-breathing,
Shall thy head be wreathing.

Ulys. Listen, O Cyclops, for I am well skill'd
In Bacchus, whom I gave thee of to drink.

Cycl. What sort of God is Bacchus then accounted?

Ulys. The greatest among men for joy of life.

Cycl. I gulp'd him down with very great delight.

Ulys. This is a God who never injures men.

Cycl. How does the God like living in a skin?

Ulys. He is content wherever he is put.

Cycl. Gods should not have their body in a skin.

Ulys. If he gives joy, what is his skin to you?

Cycl. I hate the skin, but love the wine within.

Ulys. Stay here, now drink, and make your spirit glad.

Cycl. Should I not share this liquor with my brothers?

Ulys. Keep it yourself, and be more honour'd so.

Cycl. I were more useful, giving to my friends.

Ulys. But village mirth breeds contests, broils, and blows.

Cycl. When I am drunk none shall lay hands on me.—

Ulys. A drunken man is better within doors.

Cycl. He is a fool, who drinking, loves not mirth.

Ulys. But he is wise, who drunk, remains at home.

Cycl. What shall I do, Silenus? Shall I stay?

Sil. Stay—for what need have you of pot companions?

Cycl. Indeed this place is closely carpeted
With flowers and grass.

Sil. And in the sun-warm noon
'Tis sweet to drink. Lie down beside me now,
Placing your mighty sides upon the ground.

Cycl. What do you put the cup behind me for?

Sil. That no one here may touch it.

Cycl. Thievish one!
You want to drink;—here place it in the midst.
And thou, O stranger, tell how art thou call'd?
Ulys. My name is Nobody. What favour now
Shall I receive to praise you at your hands?
Cycl. I'll feast on you the last of your companions.
Ulys. You grant your guest a fair reward, O Cyclops.
Cycl. Ha! what is this? Stealing the wine, you rogue!
Sil. It was this stranger kissing me because
I looked so beautiful.
Cycl. You shall repent
For kissing the coy wine that loves you not.
Sil. By Jupiter! you said that I am fair.
Cycl. Pour out, and only give me the cup full.
Sil. How is it mix'd? let me observe.
Cycl. Curse you!
Give it me so.
Sil. Not till I see you wear
That coronal, and taste the cup to you.
Cycl. Thou wily traitor!
Sil. But the wine is sweet.
Ay, you will roar if you are caught in drinking.
Cycl. See now, my lip is clean and all my beard.
Sil. Now put your elbow right and drink again.
As you see me drink— * * * *
Cycl. How now?
Sil. Ye Gods, what a delicious gulp!
Cycl. Guest, take it;—you pour out the wine for me.
Ulys. The wine is well accustom'd to my hand.
Cycl. Pour out the wine!
Ulys. I pour; only be silent.
Cycl. Silence is a hard task to him who drinks.
Ulys. Take it and drink it off; leave not a dreg.
O, that the drinker died with his own draught!
Cycl. Papai! the wine must be a sapient plant.
Ulys. If you drink much after a mighty feast,

Moistening your thirsty maw, you will sleep well;
If you leave aught, Bacchus will dry you up.
Cycl. Ho! ho! I can scarce rise. What pure delight!
The heavens and earth appear to whirl about
Confusedly. I see the throne of Jove
And the clear congregation of the Gods.
Now if the Graces tempted me to kiss
I would not, for the loveliest of them all
I would not leave this Ganymede.
Sil. Polypheme,
I am the Ganymede of Jupiter.
Cycl. By Jove you are; I bore you off from Dardanus.

ULYSSES *and the* CHORUS.

Ulys. Come boys of Bacchus, children of high race,
This man within is folded up in sleep,
And soon will vomit flesh from his fell maw;
The brand under the shed thrusts out its smoke,
No preparation needs, but to burn out
The monster's eye;—but bear yourselves like men.
Cho. We will have courage like the adamant rock,
All things are ready for you here; go in,
Before our father shall perceive the noise.
Ulys. Vulcan, Ætnean king! burn out with fire
The shining eye of this thy neighbouring monster!
And thou, O Sleep, nursling of gloomy night,
Descend unmix'd on this God-hated beast,
And suffer not Ulysses and his comrades,
Returning from their famous Trojan toils,
To perish by this man, who cares not either
For God or mortal; or I needs must think
That Chance is a supreme divinity,
And things divine are subject to her power.
Cho. Soon a crab the throat will seize
Of him who feeds upon his guest,
Fire will burn his lamp-like eyes
In revenge of such a feast!

A great oak stump now is lying
In the ashes yet undying.
  Come, Maron, come!
Raging let him fix the doom,
Let him tear the eyelid up
Of the Cyclops—that his cup
  May be evil!
O, I long to dance and revel
With sweet Bromian, long desired,
In loved ivy wreaths attired;
  Leaving this abandon'd home—
  Will the moment ever come?

Ulys. Be silent, ye wild things! Nay, hold your peace,
And keep your lips quite close; dare not to breathe,
Or spit, or e'en wink, lest ye wake the monster,
Until his eye be tortured out with fire.

Cho. Nay, we are silent, and we chaw the air.

Ulys. Come now, and lend a hand to the great stake
Within—it is delightfully red hot.

Cho. You then command who first should seize the stake
To burn the Cyclops' eye, that all may share
In the great enterprise.

Semi-Cho. I. We are too few,
We cannot at this distance from the door
Thrust fire into his eye.

Semi-Cho. II. And we just now
Have become lame; cannot move hand or foot.

Cho. The same thing has occurr'd to us,—our ancles
Are sprain'd with standing here, I know not how.

Ulys. What, sprain'd with standing still?

Cho. And there is dust
Or ashes in our eyes, I know not whence.

Ulys. Cowardly dogs! ye will not aid me then?

Cho. With pitying my own back and my back bone,
And with not wishing all my teeth knock'd out,

This cowardice comes of itself—but stay,
I know a famous Ophic incantation
To make the brand stick of its own accord
Into the skull of this one-eyed son of Earth.
Ulys. Of old I knew ye thus by nature; now
I know ye better.—I will use the aid
Of my own comrades—yet though weak of hand
Speak cheerfully, that so ye may awaken
The courage of my friends with your blithe words.
Cho. This I will do with peril of my life,
And bind you with my exhortations, Cyclops.

Hasten and thrust,
And parch up to dust,
The eye of the beast
Who feeds on his guest.
Burn and blind
The Ætnean hind!
Scoop and draw,
But beware lest he claw
Your limbs near his maw.

Cycl. Ah me! my eyesight is parch'd up to cinders.
Cho. What a sweet pæan! sing me that again!
Cycl. Ah me! indeed, what woe has fall'n upon me
But, wretched nothings, think ye not to flee
Out of this rock; I, standing at the outlet,
Will bar the way and catch you as you pass.
Cho. What are you roaring out, Cyclops?
Cycl. I perish!
Cho. For you are wicked.
Cycl. And besides, miserable.
Cho. What, did you fall into the fire when drunk?
Cycl. 'Twas Nobody destroy'd me.
Cho. Why then no one
Can be to blame.
Cycl. I say 'twas Nobody
Who blinded me.

Cho. Why then you are not blind.
Cycl. I wish you were as blind as I am.
Cho. Nay,
It cannot be that no one made you blind.
Cycl. You jeer me; where, I ask, is Nobody?
Cho. No where, O Cyclops * * *
Cycl. It was that stranger ruin'd me:—the wretch
First gave me wine and then burnt out my eyes,
For wine is strong and hard to struggle with.
Have they escaped, or are they yet within?
Cho. They stand under the darkness of the rock
And cling to it.
Cycl. At my right hand or left?
Cho. Close on your right.
Cycl. Where?
Cho. Near the rock itself.
You have them.
Cycl. Oh, misfortune on misfortune!
I've crack'd my skull.
Cho. Now they escape you there.
Cycl. Not there, although you say so.
Cho. Not on that side.
Cycl. Where then?
Cho. They creep about you on your left.
Cycl. Ah! I am mock'd! They jeer me in my ills.
Cho. Not there! he is a little there beyond you.
Cycl. Detested wretch! where are you?
Ulys. Far from you
I keep with care this body of Ulysses.
Cycl. What do you say? You proffer a new name.
Ulys. My father named me so; and I have taken
A full revenge for your unnatural feast;
I should have done ill to have burn'd down Troy
And not revenged the murder of my comrades.
Cycl. Ai! ai! the ancient oracle is accomplish'd;
It said that I should have my eyesight blinded

By you coming from Troy, yet it foretold
That you should pay the penalty for this
By wandering long over the homeless sea.
Ulys. I bid thee weep—consider what I say,
I go towards the shore to drive my ship
To mine own land, o'er the Sicilian wave.
Cycl. Not so, if whelming you with this huge stone
I can crush you and all your men together;
I will descend upon the shore, though blind,
Groping my way adown the steep ravine.
Cho. And we, the shipmates of Ulysses now,
Will serve our Bacchus all our happy lives.

TRANSLATION FROM MOSCHUS.

PAN loved his neighbour Echo—but that child
Of Earth and Air pined for the Satyr leaping;
The Satyr loved with wasting madness wild
The bright nymph Lyda,—and so three went weeping.
As Pan loved Echo, Echo loved the Satyr;
The Satyr, Lyda—and thus love consumed them.—
And thus to each—which was a woful matter—
To bear what they inflicted, justice doom'd them;
For inasmuch as each might hate the lover,
Each loving, so was hated.—Ye that love not
Be warn'd—in thought turn this example over,
That when ye love, the like return ye prove not.

SCENES FROM THE "MAGICO PRODIGIOSO" OF CALDERON.

CYPRIAN *as a Student;* CLARIN *and* MOSCON *as poor Scholars, with books.*

Cyp. IN the sweet solitude of this calm place,
This intricate wild wilderness of trees
And flowers and undergrowth of odorous plants,
Leave me; the books you brought out of the house
To me are ever best society.
And whilst with glorious festival and song
Antioch now celebrates the consecration
Of a proud temple to great Jupiter,
And bears his image in loud jubilee
To its new shrine, I would consume what still
Lives of the dying day, in studious thought,
Far from the throng and turmoil. You, my friends,
Go and enjoy the festival; it will
Be worth the labour, and return for me
When the sun seeks its grave among the billows,
Which among dim grey clouds on the horizon
Dance like white plumes upon a hearse;—and here
I shall expect you.

Mos. I cannot bring my mind,
Great as my haste to see the festival
Certainly is, to leave you, Sir, without
Just saying some three or four hundred words.
How is it possible that on a day
Of such festivity, you can bring your mind
To come forth to a solitary country
With three or four old books, and turn your back
On all his mirth?

Cla. My master's in the right;
There is not anything more tiresome

Than a procession day, with troops of men,
And dances, and all that.

Mos. From first to last,
Clarin, you are a temporizing flatterer;
You praise not what you feel, but what he does;—
Toad-eater!

Cla. You lie—under a mistake—
For this is the most civil sort of lie
That can be given to a man's face. I now
Say what I think.

Cyp. Enough, you foolish fellows.
Puff'd up with your own doting ignorance,
You always take the two sides of one question.
Now go, and as I said, return for me
When night falls, veiling in its shadows wide
This glorious fabric of the universe.

Mos. How happens it, although you can maintain
The folly of enjoying festivals,
That yet you go there?

Cla. Nay, the consequence
Is clear:—who ever did what he advises
Others to do?—

Mos. Would that my feet were wings,
So would I fly to Livia. [*Exit.*

Cla. To speak truth,
Livia is she who has surprised my heart;
But he is more than half way there.—So ho!
Livia, I come; good sport, Livia, So ho! [*Exit.*

Cyp. Now, since I am alone, let me examine
The question which has long disturb'd my mind
With doubt; since first I read in Plinius
The words of mystic import and deep sense
In which he defines God. My intellect
Can find no God with whom these marks and signs
Fitly agree. It is a hidden truth
Which I must fathom. [*Reads.*

Enter the DEVIL, *as a fine Gentleman.*

Dæmon. Search even as thou wilt,
But thou shalt never find what I can hide.
Cyp. What noise is that among the boughs? Who moves?
What art thou?—
Dæmon. 'Tis a foreign gentleman.
Even from this morning I have lost my way
In this wild place, and my poor horse at last
Quite overcome, has stretch'd himself upon
The enamell'd tapestry of this mossy mountain,
And feeds and rests at the same time. I was
Upon my way to Antioch upon business
Of some importance, but wrapt up in cares
(Who is exempt from this inheritance?)
I parted from my company, and lost
My way, and lost my servants and my comrades.
Cyp. 'Tis singular, that even within the sight
Of the high towers of Antioch, you could lose
Your way. Of all the avenues and green paths
Of this wild wood there is not one but leads
As to its centre, to the walls of Antioch;
Take which you will you cannot miss your road.
Dæmon. And such is ignorance! Even in the sight
Of knowledge it can draw no profit from it.
But as it still is early, and as I
Have no acquaintances in Antioch,
Being a stranger there, I will even wait
The few surviving hours of the day,
Until the night shall conquer it. I see
Both by your dress and by the books in which
You find delight and company, that you
Are a great student;—for my part, I feel
Much sympathy with such pursuits.
Cyp. Have you
Studied much?—

Dæmon. No,—and yet I know enough
Not to be wholly ignorant.
Cyp. Pray, Sir,
What science may you know?—
Dæmon. Many.
Cyp. Alas!
Much pains must we expend on one alone,
And even then attain it not;—but you
Have the presumption to assert that you
Know many without study.
Dæmon. And with truth.
For in the country whence I come, sciences
Require no learning,—they are known.
Cyp. Oh, would
I were of that bright country! for in this
The more we study, we the more discover
Our ignorance.
Dæmon. It is so true that I
Had so much arrogance as to oppose
The chair of the most high Professorship,
And obtain'd many votes, and though I lost,
The attempt was still more glorious, than the failure
Could be dishonourable: if you believe not,
Let us refer it to dispute respecting
That which you know best, and although I know
Not the opinion you maintain, and though
It be the true one, I will take the contrary.
Cyp. The offer gives me pleasure. I am now
Debating with myself upon a passage
Of Plinius, and my mind is rack'd with doubt
To understand and know who is the God
Of whom he speaks.
Dæmon. It is a passage, if
I recollect it right, couch'd in these words:
"God is one supreme goodness, one pure essence,
One substance, and one sense, all sight, all hands."

Cyp. 'Tis true.
Dæmon. What difficulty find you here?
Cyp. I do not recognise among the Gods
The God defined by Plinius; if he must
Be supreme goodness, even Jupiter
Is not supremely good; because we see
His deeds are evil, and his attributes
Tainted with mortal weakness; in what manner
Can supreme goodness be consistent with
The passions of humanity?
Dæmon. The wisdom
Of the old world mask'd with the names of Gods
The attributes of Nature and of Man;
A sort of popular philosophy.
Cyp. This reply will not satisfy me, for
Such awe is due to the high name of God
That ill should never be imputed. Then,
Examining the question with more care,
It follows, that the gods should always will
That which is best, were they supremely good.
How then does one will one thing—one another?
And you may not say that I allege
Poetical or philosophic learning:—
Consider the ambiguous responses
Of their oracular statues; from two shrines
Two armies shall obtain the assurance of
One victory. Is it not indisputable
That two contending wills can never lead
To the same end? And being opposite,
If one be good is not the other evil?
Evil in God is inconceivable;
But supreme goodness fails among the gods
Without their union.
Dæmon. I deny your major.
These responses are means towards some end
Unfathom'd by our intellectual beam.

They are the work of providence, and more
The battle's loss may profit those who lose,
Than victory advantage those who win.

Cyp. That I admit, and yet that God should not
(Falsehood is incompatible with deity)
Assure the victory; it would be enough
To have permitted the defeat; if God
Be all sight,—God, who beheld the truth,
Would not have given assurance of an end
Never to be accomplish'd; thus, although
The Deity may according to his attributes
Be well distinguish'd into persons, yet,
Even in the minutest circumstance,
His essence must be one.

Dæmon. To attain the end
The affections of the actors in the scene
Must have been thus influenced by his voice.

Cyp. But for a purpose thus subordinate
He might have employ'd genii, good or evil,—
A sort of spirits call'd so by the learned,
Who roam about inspiring good or evil,
And from whose influence and existence we
May well infer our immortality:—
Thus God might easily, without descending
To a gross falsehood in his proper person,
Have moved the affections by this mediation
To the just point.

Dæmon. These trifling contradictions
Do not suffice to impugn the unity
Of the high gods; in things of great importance
They still appear unanimous; consider
That glorious fabric—man,—his workmanship,
Is stamp'd with one conception.

Cyp. Who made man
Must have, methinks, the advantage of the others,
If they are equal, might they not have risen

In opposition to the work, and being
All hands, according to our author here,
Have still destroy'd even as the other made?
If equal in their power, and only unequal
In opportunity, which of the two
Will remain conqueror?

Dæmon. On impossible
And false hypothesis there can be built
No argument. Say, what do you infer
From this?

Cyp. That there must be a mighty God
Of supreme goodness and of highest grace,
All sight, all hands, all truth, infallible,
Without an equal and without a rival;
The cause of all things and the effect of nothing,
One power, one will, one substance, and one essence.
And in whatever persons, one or two,
His attributes may be distinguish'd, one
Sovereign power, one solitary essence,
One cause of all cause. [*They rise.*

Dæmon. How can I impugn
So clear a consequence?

Cyp. Do you regret
My victory?

Dæmon. Who but regrets a check
In rivalry of wit? I could reply
And urge new difficulties, but will now
Depart, for I hear steps of men approaching,
And it is time that I should now pursue
My journey to the city.

Cyp. Go in peace!

Dæmon. Remain in peace! Since thus it profits him
To study, I will wrap his senses up
In sweet oblivion of all thought, but of
A piece of excellent beauty; and as I
Have power given me to wage enmity

Against Justina's soul, I will extract
From one effect two vengeances. [*Exit.*

Cyp. I never
Met a more learned person. Let me now
Revolve this doubt again with careful mind. [*He reads.*

Enter LELIO *and* FLORO.

Lel. Here stop. These toppling rocks and tangled boughs,
Impenetrable by the noonday beam,
Shall be sole witnesses of what we ——

Flo. Draw!
If there were words, here is the place for deeds.

Lel. Thou needest not instruct me; well I know
That in the field the silent tongue of steel
Speaks thus. [*They fight.*

Cyp. Ha! what is this? Lelio, Floro,
Be it enough that Cyprian stands between you,
Although unarm'd.

Lel. Whence comest thou, to stand
Between me and my vengeance?

Flo. From what rocks
And desert cells?

Enter MOSCON *and* CLARIN.

Mos. Run, run! for where we left my master
We hear the clash of swords.

Cla. I never
Run to approach things of this sort, but only
To avoid them. Sir! Cyprian! sir!

Cyp. Be silent, fellows! What! two friends who are
In blood and fame the eyes and hope of Antioch:
One of the noble men of the Colatti,
The other son of the Governor, adventure
And cast away, on some slight cause no doubt,
Two lives the honour of their country?

Lel. Cyprian!
Although my high respect towards your person
Holds now my sword supended, thou canst not
Restore it to the slumber of its scabbard.
Thou knowest more of science than the duel;
For when two men of honour take the field,
No [ ] or respect can make them friends,
But one must die in the pursuit.

Flo. I pray
That you depart hence with your people, and
Leave us to finish what we have begun
Without advantage.

Cyp. Though you may imagine
That I know little of the laws of duel,
Which vanity and valour instituted,
You are in error. By my birth I am
Held no less than yourselves to know the limits
Of honour and of infamy, nor has study
Quench'd the free spirit which first order'd them;
And thus to me, as one well experienced
In the false quicksands of the sea of honour,
You may refer the merits of the case;
And if I should perceive in your relation
That either has the right to satisfaction
From the other, I give you my word of honour
To leave you.

Lel. Under this condition then
I will relate the cause, and you will cede
And must confess th' impossibility
Of compromise; for the same lady is
Beloved by Floro and myself.

Flo. It seems
Much to me that the light of day should look
Upon that idol of my heart—but he ——
Leave us to fight, according to thy word.

Cyp. Permit one question further: is the lady

Impossible to hope or not?
Lel. She is
So excellent, that if the light of day
Should excite Floro's jealousy, it were
Without just cause, for even the light of day
Trembles to gaze on her.
Cyp. Would you for your
Part marry her?
Flo. Such is my confidence.
Cyp. And you?
Lel. O, would that I could lift my hope
So high? for though she is extremely poor,
Her virtue is her dowry.
Cyp. And if you both
Would marry her, is it not weak and vain,
Culpable and unworthy, thus beforehand
To slur her honour. What would the world say
If one should slay the other, and if she
Should afterwards espouse the murderer?

[*The rivals agree to refer their quarrel to* CYPRIAN; *who in consequence visits* JUSTINA, *and becomes enamoured of her: she disdains him, and he retires to a solitary sea-shore.*

SCENE II.

Cyp. Oh, memory! permit it not
That the tyrant of my thought
Be another soul that still
Holds dominion o'er the will,
That would refuse, but can no more,
To bend, to tremble, and adore.
Vain idolatry!—I saw,
And gazing, became blind with error;
Weak ambition, which the awe
Of her presence bound to terror!

So beautiful she was—and I,
Between my love and jealousy,
Am so convulsed with hope and fear,
Unworthy as it may appear;—
So bitter is the life I live,
That, hear me, Hell! I now would give
To thy most detested spirit
My soul, for ever to inherit,
To suffer punishment and pine,
So this woman may be mine.
Hear'st thou, Hell! dost thou reject it?
My soul is offer'd!

Dæmon (*unseen*). I accept it.

[*Tempest, with thunder and lightning.*

Cyp. What is this? ye heavens for ever pure,
At once intensely radiant and obscure!
Athwart the ethereal halls
The lightning's arrow and the thunder-balls
The day affright.
As from the horizon round,
Burst with earthquake sound,
In mighty torrents the electric fountains;—
Clouds quench the sun, and thunder smoke
Strangles the air, and fire eclipses heaven.
Philosophy, thou canst not even
Compel their causes underneath thy yoke,
From yonder clouds even to the waves below
The fragments of a single ruin choke
Imagination's flight;
For, on flakes of surge, like feathers light,
The ashes of the desolation cast
Upon the gloomy blast,
Tell of the footsteps of the storm.
And nearer see the melancholy form
Of a great ship, the outcast of the sea,
Drives miserably!

And it must fly the pity of the port,
Or perish, and its last and sole resort
Is its own raging enemy.
The terror of the thrilling cry
Was a fatal prophecy
Of coming death, who hovers now
Upon that shatter'd prow,
That they who die not may be dying still.
And not alone the insane elements
Are populous with wild portents,
But that sad ship is as a miracle
Of sudden ruin, for it drives so fast
It seems as if it had array'd its form
With the headlong storm.
It strikes—I almost feel the shock,—
It stumbles on a jagged rock,—
Sparkles of blood on the white foam are cast.

[*A Tempest.*

All exclaim (*within*). We are all lost!
Dæmon (*within*). Now from this plank will I
Pass to the land and thus fulfil my scheme.
Cyp. As in contempt of the elemental rage
A man comes forth in safety, while the ship's
Great form is in a watery eclipse
Obliterated from the Ocean's page,
And round its wreck the huge sea-monsters sit,
A horrid conclave, and the whistling wave
Are heap'd over its carcase, like a grave.

The DÆMON *enters, as escaped from the sea.*

Dæmon (*aside*). It was essential to my purposes
To wake a tumult on the sapphire ocean,
That in this unknown form I might at length
Wipe out the blot of the discomfiture
Sustain'd upon the mountain, and assail

With a new war the soul of Cyprian,
Forging the instruments of his destruction
Even from his love and from his wisdom.—Oh!
Beloved earth, dear mother, in thy bosom
I seek a refuge from the monster who
Precipitates itself upon me.

Cyp. Friend,
Collect thyself; and be the memory
Of thy late suffering, and thy greatest sorrow
But as a shadow of the past,—for nothing
Beneath the circle of the moon, but flows
And changes, and can never know repose.

Dæmon. And who art thou, before whose feet my fate
Has prostrated me?

Cyp. One who moved with pity,
Would soothe its stings.

Dæmon. Oh! that can never be!
No solace can my lasting sorrows find.

Cyp. Wherefore?

Dæmon. Because my happiness is lost.
Yet I lament what has long ceased to be
The object of desire or memory,
And my life is not life.

Cyp. Now, since the fury
Of this earthquaking hurricane is still,
And the crystalline heaven has reassumed
Its windless calm so quickly, that it seems
As if its heavy wrath had been awaken'd
Only to overwhelm that vessel,—speak,
Who art thou, and whence comest thou?

Dæmon. Far more
My coming hither cost, than thou hast seen
Or I can tell. Among my misadventures
This shipwreck is the least. Wilt thou hear?

Cyp. Speak.

Dæmon. Since thou desirest, I will then unveil

Myself to thee ;—for in myself I am
A world of happiness and misery;
This I have lost, and that I must lament
For ever. In my attributes I stood
So high and so heroically great,
In lineage so supreme, and with a genius
Which penetrated with a glance the world
Beneath my feet, that won by my high merit
A king—whom I may call the king of kings,
Because all others tremble in their pride
Before the terrors of his countenance,
In his high palace roof'd with brightest gems
Of living light—call them the stars of Heaven—
Named me his counsellor. But the high praise
Stung me with pride and envy, and I rose
In mighty competition, to ascend
His seat and place my foot triumphantly
Upon his subject thrones. Chastised, I know
The depth to which ambition falls; too mad
Was the attempt, and yet more mad were now
Repentance of the irrevocable deed:—
Therefore I chose this ruin with the glory
Of not to be subdued, before the shame
Of reconciling me with him who reigns
By coward cession.—Nor was I alone,
Nor am I now, nor shall I be alone;
And there was hope, and there may still be hope,
For many suffrages among his vassals
Hail'd me their lord and king, and many still
Are mine, and many more, perchance shall be.
Thus vanquish'd, though in fact victorious,
I left his seat of empire, from mine eye
Shooting forth poisonous lightning, while my words
With inauspicious thunderings shook Heaven,
Proclaiming vengeance, public as my wrong,
And imprecating on his prostrate slaves

Rapine, and death, and outrage. Then I sail'd
Over the mighty fabric of the world,
A pirate ambush'd in its pathless sands,
A lynx crouch'd watchfully among its caves
And craggy shores; and I have wander'd over
The expanse of these wide wildernesses
In this great ship, whose bulk is now dissolved
In the light breathings of the invisible wind,
And which the sea has made a dustless ruin,
Seeking ever a mountain, through whose forests
I seek a man, whom I must now compel
To keep his word with me. I came array'd
In tempest, and although my power could well
Bridle the forest winds in their career,
For other causes I forbore to soothe
Their fury to Favonian gentleness,
I could and would not; (thus I wake in him [*Aside.*
A love of magic art.) Let not this tempest,
Nor the succeeding calm excite thy wonder;
For by my art the sun would turn as pale
As his weak sister with unwonted fear.
And in my wisdom are the orbs of Heaven
Written as in a record; I have pierced
The flaming circles of their wondrous spheres
And know them as thou knowest every corner
Of this dim spot. Let it not seem to thee
That I boast vainly; wouldst thou that I work
A charm over this waste and savage wood,
This Babylon of crags and aged trees,
Filling its leafy coverts with a horror
Thrilling and strange? I am the friendless guest
Of these wild oaks and pines—and as from thee
I have received the hospitality
Of this rude place, I offer thee the fruit
Of years of toil in recompense; whate'er
Thy wildest dream presented to thy thought

As object of desire, that shall be thine.

* * * * *

And thenceforth shall so firm an amity
'Twixt thou and me be, that neither fortune,
The monstrous phantom which pursues success,
That careful miser, that free prodigal,
Who ever alternates with changeful hand,
Evil and good, reproach and fame; nor Time,
That loadstar of the ages, to whose beam
The winged years speed o'er the intervals
Of their unequal revolutions; nor
Heaven itself, whose beautiful bright stars
Rule and adorn the world, can ever make
The least division between thee and me,
Since now I find a refuge in thy favour.

SCENE III.—*The* DÆMON *tempts* JUSTINA, *who is a Christian.*

Dæmon. Abyss of Hell! I call on thee
Thou wild misrule of thine own anarchy!
From thy prison-house set free
The spirits of voluptuous death,
That with their mighty breath
They may destroy a world of virgin thoughts;
Let her chaste mind with fancies thick as motes
Be peopled from thy shadowy deep,
Till her guiltless phantasy
Full to overflowing be!
And with sweetest harmony,
Let birds, and flowers, and leaves, and all things move
To love, only to love.
Let nothing meet her eyes
But signs of Love's soft victories;
Let nothing meet her ear
But sounds of love's sweet sorrow,
So that from faith no succour she may borrow,
But, guided by my spirit blind

And in a magic snare entwined,
She may now seek Cyprian.
Begin, while I in silence bind
My voice, when thy sweet song thou has began.
A Voice within. What is the glory far above
All else in human life?
All. Love! love!
[*While these words are sung, the* DÆMON *goes out at one door, and* JUSTINA *enters at another.*
First Voice. There is no form in which the fire
Of love its traces has impress'd not.
Man lives far more in love's desire
Than by life's breath, soon possess'd not.
If all that lives must love or die,
All shapes on earth, or sea, or sky,
With one consent to Heaven cry
That the glory far above
All else in life is ——
All. Love! O love!
Just. Thou melancholy thought which art
So fluttering and so sweet, to thee
When did I give thee liberty
Thus to afflict my heart?
What is the cause of this new power
Which doth my fever'd being move,
Momently raging more and more?
What subtle pain is kindled now
Which from my heart doth overflow
Into my senses?—
All. Love, O, love!
Just. 'Tis that enamour'd nightingale
Who gives me the reply;
He ever tells the same soft tale
Of passion and of constancy
To his mate, who rapt and fond
Listening sits, a bough beyond.

Be silent, Nightingale—no more
Make me think, in hearing thee
Thus tenderly thy love deplore,
If a bird can feel his so,
What a man would feel for me.
And, voluptuous vine, O thou
Who seekest most when least pursuing,—
To the trunk thou interlacest
Art the verdure which embracest,
And the weight which is its ruin,—
No more, with green embraces, vine,
Make me think on what thou lovest,—
For whilst thou thus thy boughs entwine,
I fear lest thou should'st teach me, sophist,
How arms might be entangled too.

Light-enchanted sunflower, thou
Who gazest ever true and tender
On the sun's revolving splendour!
Follow not his faithless glance
With thy faded countenance,
Nor teach thy beating heart to fear,
If leaves can mourn without a tear,
How eyes must weep! O Nightingale,
Cease from thy enamour'd tale,—
Leafy vine, unwreathe thy bower,
Restless sunflower, cease to move,—
Or tell me all, what poisonous power
Ye use against me—

All. Love! love! love!

Just. It cannot be!—Whom have I ever loved?
Trophies of my oblivion and disdain,
Floro and Lelio did I not reject?
And Cyprian?—

[*She becomes troubled at the name of Cyprian.*

Did I not requite him
With such severity, that he has fled
Where none has ever heard of him again?—
Alas! I now begin to fear that this
May be the occasion whence desire grows bold,
As if there were no danger. From the moment
That I pronounced to my own listening heart,
Cyprian is absent, O me miserable!
I know not what I feel! [*More calmly.*
It must be pity
To think that such a man, whom all the world
Admired, should be forgot by all the world,
And I the cause. [*She again becomes troubled.*
And yet if it were pity,
Floro and Lelio might have equal share,
For they are both imprison'd for my sake. [*Calmly.*
Alas! what reasonings are these? it is
Enough I pity him, and that, in vain,
Without this ceremonious subtlety.
And woe is me! I know not where to find him now,
Even should I seek him through this wide world.

Enter DÆMON.

Dæmon. Follow, and I will lead thee where he is.
Just. And who art thou, who has found entrance hither,
Into my chamber through the doors and locks?
Art thou a monstrous shadow which my madness
Has form'd in the idle air?
Dæmon. No. I am one
Call'd by the thought which tyrannizes thee
From his eternal dwelling; who this day
Is pledged to bear thee unto Cyprian.
Just. So shall thy promise fail. This agony
Of passion which afflicts my heart and soul
May sweep imagination in its storm,
The will is firm.

Dæmon. Already half is done
In the imagination of an act.
The sin incurr'd, the pleasure then remains,
Let not the will stop half-way on the road.

Just. I will not be discouraged, nor despair,
Although I thought it, and although 'tis true,
That thought is but a prelude to the deed:—
Thought is not in my power, but action is:
I will not move my foot to follow thee.

Dæmon. But far a mightier wisdom than thine own
Exerts itself within thee, with such power
Compelling thee to that which it inclines
That it shall force thy step; how wilt thou then
Resist, Justina?

Just. By my free-will.

Dæmon. I
Must force thy will.

Just. It is invincible;
It were not free if thou hadst power upon it.

[*He draws, but cannot move her.*

Dæmon. Come, where a pleasure waits thee.

Just. It were bought
Too dear.

Dæmon. 'Twill soothe thy heart to softest peace.

Just. 'Tis dread captivity.

Dæmon. 'Tis joy, 'tis glory.

Just. 'Tis shame, 'tis torment, 'tis despair.

Dæmon. But how
Canst thou defend thyself from that or me,
If my power drags thee onward?

Just. My defence
Consists in God.

[*He vainly endeavours to force her, and at last releases her.*

Dæmon. Woman, thou hast subdued me,

Only by not owning thyself subdued.
But since thou thus findest defence in God,
I will assume a feigned form, and thus
Make thee a victim of my baffled rage.
For I will mask a spirit in thy form
Who will betray thy name to infamy,
And doubly shall I triumph in thy loss,
First by dishonouring thee, and then by turning
False pleasure to true ignominy. [*Exit.*

Just. I
Appeal to Heaven against thee ; so that Heaven
May scatter thy delusions, and the blot
Upon my fame vanish in idle thought,
Even as flame dies in the envious air,
And as the floweret wanes at morning frost,
And thou shouldst never——But, alas ! to whom
Do I still speak?—Did not a man but now
Stand here before me?—No, I am alone,
And yet I saw him. Is he gone so quickly?
Or can the heated mind engender shapes
From its own fear? Some terrible and strange
Peril is near. Lisander ! father ! lord !
Livia !—

Enter LISANDER *and* LIVIA.

Lis. O, my daughter ! What?
Liv. What?
Just. Saw you
A man go forth from my apartment now?—
I scarce sustain myself !
Lis. A man here !
Just. Have you not seen him?
Liv. No, Lady.
Just. I saw him.
Lis. 'Tis impossible ; the doors
Which led to this apartment were all lock'd.
Liv. (*aside*). I dare say it was Moscon whom she saw,

For he was lock'd up in my room.

Lis. It must
Have been some image of thy phantasy.
Such melancholy as thou feedest, is
Skilful in forming such in the vain air
Out of the motes and atoms of the day.

Liv. My master's in the right.

Just. O, would it were
Delusion; but I fear some greater ill.
I feel as if out of my bleeding bosom
My heart was torn in fragments; ay,
Some mortal spell is wrought against my frame;
So potent was the charm, that had not God
Shielded my humble innocence from wrong,
I should have sought my sorrow and my shame
With willing steps.—Livia, quick bring my cloak,
For I must seek refuge from these extremes
Even in the temple of the highest God
Which secretly the faithful worship.

Liv. Here.

Just. (*putting on her cloak*). In this, as in a shroud of snow, may I
Quench the consuming fire in which I burn,
Wasting away!

Lis. And I will go with thee.

Liv. When I once see them safe out of the house
I shall breathe freely.

Just. So do I confide
In thy just favour, Heaven!

Lis. Let us go

Just. Thine is the cause, great God! turn for my sake,
And for thine own, mercifully to me!

SCENES FROM THE FAUST OF GOETHE.

PROLOGUE IN HEAVEN.

The Lord and the Host of Heaven. Enter three Archangels.

Raphael. THE sun makes music as of old
Amid the rival spheres of Heaven
On its predestined circle roll'd
With thunder speed: the Angels even
Draw strength from gazing on its glance,
Though none its meaning fathom may:—
The world's unwither'd countenance
Is bright as at creation's day.
Gab. And swift and swift, with rapid lightness,
The adorned Earth spins silently,
Alternating Elysian brightness
With deep and dreadful night; the sea
Foams in broad billows from the deep
Up to the rocks, and rocks and ocean,
Onward, with spheres which never sleep,
Are hurried in eternal motion.
Mic. And tempests in contention roar
From land to sea, from sea to land;
And, raging, weave a chain of power,
Which girds the earth, as with a band.—
A flashing desolation there,
Flames before the thunder's way;
But thy servants, Lord, revere
The gentle changes of thy day.
Chorus of the Three. The Angels draw strength from thy glance,
Though no one comprehend thee may;—

Thy world's unwither'd countenance
  Is bright as on creation's day.*

Enter MEPHISTOPHELES.

Meph. As thou, O Lord, once more art kind enough
To interest thyself in our affairs—
And ask, "How goes it with you there below?"

* *Rap.* The sun sounds, according to ancient custom,
In the song of emulation of his brother-spheres.
And its fore-written circle
Fulfils with a step of thunder.
Its countenance gives the Angels strength
Though no one can fathom it.
The incredible high works
Are excellent as at the first day.
Gab. And swift, and inconceivably swift
The adornment of earth winds itself round,
And exchanges Paradise-clearness
With deep dreadful night.
The sea foams in broad waves
From its deep bottom, up to the rocks,
And rocks and sea are torn on together
In the eternal swift course of the spheres.
Mic. And storms roar in emulation
From sea to land, from land to sea,
And make, raging, a chain
Of deepest operation round about.
There flames a flashing destruction
Before the path of the thunderbolt.
But thy servants, Lord, revere
The gentle alternations of thy day.
Cho. Thy countenance gives the Angels strength,
Though none can comprehend thee;
And all thy lofty works
Are excellent as at the first day.

Such is a literal translation of this astonishing chorus; it is impossible to represent in another language the melody of the versification; even the volatile strength and delicacy of the ideas escape in the crucible of translation, and the reader is surprised to find a caput mortuum.—*Translator's Note.*

And as indulgently at other times
Thou tookedst not my visits in ill part,
Thou seest me here once more among thy household.
Though I should scandalize this company,
You will excuse me if I do not talk
In the high style which they think fashionable;
My pathos would certainly make you laugh too,
Had you not long since given over laughing.
Nothing know I to say of suns and worlds;
I observe only how men plague themselves;—
The little god o' the world keeps the same stamp,
As wonderful as on creation's day:—
A little better would he live, hadst thou
Not given him a glimpse of heaven's light,
Which he calls reason, and employs it only
To live more beastlily than any beast.
With reverence to your Lordship be it spoken,
He's like one of those long-legg'd grasshoppers,
Who flits and jumps about, and sings for ever
The same old song i' the grass. There let him lie,
Burying his nose in every heap of dung.

The Lord. Have you no more to say. Do you come here
Always to scold, and cavil, and complain?
Seems nothing ever right to you on earth?

Meph. No, Lord! I find all there, as ever, bad at best.
Even I am sorry for man's days of sorrow;
I could myself almost give up the pleasure
Of plaguing the poor things.

The Lord. Knowest thou Faust?

Meph. The Doctor?

The Lord. Ay; my servant Faust.

Meph. In truth
He serves you in a fashion quite his own;
And the fool's meat and drink are not of earth.
His aspirations bear him on so far
That he is half aware of his own folly,

For he demands from Heaven its fairest star,
And from the earth the highest joy it bears,
Yet all things far, and all things near, are vain
To calm the deep emotions of his breast.

The Lord. Though he now serves me in a cloud of error,
I will soon lead him forth to the clear day.
When trees look green full well the gardener knows
That fruits and blooms will deck the coming year.

Meph. What will you bet?—now I am sure of winning—
Only, observe you give me full permission
To lead him softly on my path.

The Lord. As long
As he shall live upon the earth, so long
Is nothing unto thee forbidden—Man
Must err till he has ceased to struggle.

Meph. Thanks.
And that is all I ask; for willingly
I never make acquaintance with the dead.
The full fresh cheeks of youth are food for me,
And if a corpse knocks, I am not at home.
For I am like a cat—I like to play
A little with the mouse before I eat it.

The Lord. Well, well! it is permitted thee. Draw thou
His spirit from its springs; as thou find'st power,
Seize him and lead him on thy downward path;
And stand ashamed when failure teaches thee
That a good man, even in his darkest longings,
Is well aware of the right way.

Meph. Well and good.
I am not in much doubt about my bet,
And if I lose, then 'tis your turn to crow;
Enjoy your triumph then with a full breast.
Ay; dust shall he devour, and that with pleasure,
Like my old paramour, the famous Snake.

The Lord. Pray come here when it suits you; for I never
Had much dislike for people of your sort.

And, among all the Spirits who rebell'd,
The knave was ever the least tedious to me.
The active spirit of man soon sleeps, and soon
He seeks unbroken quiet; therefore I
Have given him the Devil for a companion,
Who may provoke him to some sort of work,
And must create for ever.—But ye, pure
Children of God, enjoy eternal beauty;—
Let that which ever operates and lives
Clasp you within the limits of its love;
And seize with sweet and melancholy thoughts
The floating phantoms of its loveliness.

[*Heaven closes; the Archangels exeunt.*

Meph. From time to time I visit the old fellow,
And I take care to keep on good terms with him.
Civil enough is this same God Almighty,
To talk so freely with the Devil himself.

MAY-DAY NIGHT.

SCENE.—*The Hartz Mountain, a desolate Country.*

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

Meph. Would you not like a broomstick? As for me
I wish I had a good stout ram to ride;
For we are still far from th' appointed place.
Faust. This knotted staff is help enough for me,
Whilst I feel fresh upon my legs. What good
Is there in making short a pleasant way?
To creep along the labyrinths of the vales,
And climb those rocks, where ever-babbling springs
Precipitate themselves in waterfalls,
Is the true sport that seasons such a path.

Already Spring kindles the birchen spray,
And the hoar pines already feel her breath:
Shall she not work also within our limbs?

Meph. Nothing of such an influence do I feel.
My body is all wintry, and I wish
The flowers upon our path were frost and snow.
But see, how melancholy rises now,
Dimly uplifting her belated beam,
The blank unwelcome round of the red moon,
And gives so bad a light, that every step
One stumbles 'gainst some crag. With your permission,
I'll call an Ignis-fatuus to our aid:
I see one yonder burning jollily.
Halloo, my friend! may I request that you
Would favour us with your bright company?
Why should you blaze away there to no purpose?
Pray be so good as light us up this way.

Ignis-Fatuus. With reverence be it spoken, I will try
To overcome the lightness of my nature;
Our course, you know, is generally zig-zag.

Meph. Ha, ha! your worship thinks you have to deal
With men. Go straight on, in the Devil's name,
Or I shall puff your flickering life out.

Ig.-Fat. Well,
I see you are the master of the house;
I will accommodate myself to you.
Only consider, that to-night this mountain
Is all enchanted, and if Jack-a-lantern
Shows you his way, though you should miss your own,
You ought not to be too exact with him.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, *and* IGNIS-FATUUS,
in alternate Chorus.

The limits of the sphere of dream,
The bounds of true and false, are past.
Lead us on, thou wandering gleam,

Lead us onward, far and fast,
To the wide, the desert waste.

But see, how swift advance and shift,
Trees behind trees, row by row,—
How, clift by clift, rocks bend and lift
Their frowning foreheads as we go:
The giant-snouted crags, ho! ho!
How they snort, and how they blow!

Through the mossy sods and stones,
Stream and streamlet hurry down
A rushing throng! A sound of song
Beneath the vault of Heaven is blown!
Sweet notes of love, the speaking tones
Of this bright day, sent down to say
That Paradise on Earth is known,
Resound around, beneath, above.
All we hope and all we love
Finds a voice in this blithe strain,
Which wakens hill and wood and rill,
And vibrates far o'er field and vale,
And which Echo, like the tale
Of old times, repeats again.

To whoo! to whoo! near, nearer now
The sound of song, the rushing throng!
Are the screech, the lapwing, and the jay,
All awake as if 'twere day?
See, with long legs and belly wide,
A salamander in the brake!
Every root is like a snake,
And along the loose hill-side,
With strange contortions through the night,
Curls, to seize or to affright;
And, animated, strong, and many,
They dart forth polypus-antennæ,
To blister with their poison spume

The wanderer. Through the dazzling gloom
The many-colour'd mice, that thread
The dewy turf beneath our tread,
In troops each other's motions cross,
Through the heath and through the moss;
And, in legions intertangled,
The fire-flies flit, and swarm, and throng,
Till all the mountain depths are spangled.

Tell me, shall we go or stay?
Shall we onward? Come along!
Everything around is swept
Forward, onward, far away!
Trees and masses intercept
The sight, and wisps on every side
Are puffed up and multiplied.

Meph. Now vigorously seize my skirt, and gain
This pinnacle of isolated crag.
One may observe with wonder from this point,
How Mammon glows among the mountains.
Faust. Ay—
And strangely through the solid depth below
A melancholy light, like the red dawn,
Shoots from the lowest gorge of the abyss
Of mountains, lightning hitherward: there rise
Pillars of smoke, here clouds float gently by;
Here the light burns soft as the enkindled air,
Or the illumined dust of golden flowers;
And now it glides like tender colours spreading;
And now bursts forth in fountains from the earth;
And now it winds, one torrent of broad light,
Through the far valley with a hundred veins;
And now once more within that narrow corner
Masses itself into intensest splendour.
And near us, see, sparks spring out of the ground,
Like golden sand scatter'd upon the darkness;

The pinnacles of that black wall of mountains
That hems us in, are kindled.
Meph. Rare, in faith!
Does not Sir Mammon gloriously illuminate
His palace for this festival—it is
A pleasure which you had not known before.
I spy the boisterous guests already.
Faust. How
The children of the wind rage in the air!
With what fierce strokes they fall upon my neck!
Meph. Cling tightly to the old ribs of the crag.
Beware! for if with them thou warrest
In their fierce flight towards the wilderness,
Their breath will sweep thee into dust, and drag
Thy body to a grave in the abyss.
A cloud thickens the night.
Hark! how the tempest crashes through the forest
The owls fly out in strange affright;
The columns of the evergreen palaces
Are split and shatter'd;
The roots creak, and stretch, and groan;
And ruinously overthrown,
The trunks are crush'd and shatter'd
By the fierce blast's unconquerable stress.
Over each other crack and crash they all
In terrible and intertangled fall;
And through the ruins of the shaken mountain
The airs hiss and howl—
It is not the voice of the fountain,
Nor the wolf in his midnight prowl.
Dost thou not hear?
Strange accents are ringing
Aloft, afar, anear;
The witches are singing!
The torrent of a raging wizard song
Streams the whole mountain along.

Chorus of Witches. The stubble is yellow, the corn is green,
Now to the Brocken the witches go;
The mighty multitude here may be seen
Gathering, wizard and witch, below.
Sir Urean is sitting aloft in the air;
Hey over stock! and hey over stone!
'Twixt witches and incubi, what shall be done?
Tell it who dare! tell it who dare!
A Voice. Upon a sow-swine, whose farrows were nine,
Old Baubo rideth alone.
Chorus. Honour her, to whom honour is due,
Old mother Baubo, honour to you!
An able sow, with old Baubo upon her,
Is worthy of glory, and worthy of honour!
The legion of witches is coming behind,
Darkening the night, and outspeeding the wind—
A Voice. Which way comest thou!
A Voice. Over Ilsenstein;
The owl was awake in the white moonshine;
I saw her at rest in her downy nest,
And she stared at me with her broad, bright eye.
Voices. And you may now as well, take your course on to Hell,
Since you ride by so fast, on the headlong blast.
A Voice. She dropt poison upon as I past.
Here are the wounds—
Chorus of Witches. Come away! come along!
The way is wide, the way is long,
But what is that for a Bedlam throng?
Stick with the prong, and scratch with the broom.
The child in the cradle lies strangled at home,
And the mother is clapping her hands.—
Semichorus of Wizards I. We glide in
Like snails when the women are all away;

And from a house once given over to sin
Woman has a thousand steps to stray.
Semichorus II. A thousand steps must a woman take,
Where a man but a single spring will make.
Voices Above. Come with us, come with us, from Felunsee.
Voices Below. With what joy would we fly, through the upper sky!
We are wash'd, we are 'nointed, stark naked are we;
But our toil and our pain, is for ever in vain.
Both Choruses. The wind is still, the stars are fled,
The melancholy moon is dead;
The magic notes, like spark on spark,
Drizzle, whistling through the dark.
Come away!
Voices Below. Stay, oh, stay!
Voices Above. Out of the crannies of the rocks,
Who calls?
Voices Below. Oh, let me join your flocks!
I, three hundred years have striven
To catch your skirt and mount to Heaven,—
And still in vain. Oh, might I be
With company akin to me!
Both Choruses. Some on a ram and some on a prong,
On poles and on broomsticks we flutter along;
Forlorn is the wight who can rise not to-night.
A Half-Witch Below. I have been tripping this many an hour:
Are the others already so far before?
No quiet at home, and no peace abroad!
And less methinks is found by the road. [aroint!
Chorus of Witches. Come onward away! aroint thee,
A witch to be strong must anoint—anoint—
Then every trough will be boat enough;
With a rag for a sail we can sweep through the sky,
Who flies not to-night, when means he to fly?

Both Choruses. We cling to the skirt, and we strike
on the ground;
Witch-legions thicken around and around;
Wizard-swarms cover the heath all over.
[*They descend.*

Meph. What thronging, dashing, raging, rustling;
What whispering, babbling, hissing, bustling;
What glimmering, spurting, stinking, burning,
As Heaven and Earth were overturning.
There is a true witch element about us,
Take hold on me, or we shall be divided;—
Where are you?

Faust (*from a distance*). Here!

Meph. What!
I must exert my authority in the house.
Place for young Voland! pray make way, good people.
Take hold on me, doctor, and with one step
Let us escape from this unpleasant crowd:
They are too mad for people of my sort.
Just there shines a peculiar kind of light—
Something attracts me in those bushes. Come
This way: we shall slip down there in a minute.

Faust. Spirit of Contradiction! Well, lead on-
'Twere a wise feat indeed to wander out
Into the Brocken upon May-day night,
And then to isolate oneself in scorn,
Disgusted with the humours of the time.

Meph. See yonder, round a many-colour'd flame
A merry club is huddled altogether:
Even with such little people as sit there
One would not be alone.

Faust. Would that I were
Up yonder in the glow and whirling smoke,
Where the blind million rush impetuously
To meet the evil ones; there might I solve
Many a riddle that torments me!

Meph. Yet
Many a riddle there is tied anew
Inextricably. Let the great world rage!
We will stay here safe in the quiet dwellings.
'Tis an old custom. Men have ever built
Their own small world in the great world of all.
I see young witches naked there, and old ones
Wisely attired with greater decency.
Be guided now by me, and you shall buy
A pound of pleasure with a dram of trouble.
I hear them tune their instruments—one must
Get used to this damn'd scraping. Come, I'll lead you
Among them; and what there you do and see,
As a fresh compact 'twixt us two shall be.
How say you now? this space is wide enough—
Look forth, you cannot see the end of it—
An hundred bonfires burn in rows, and they
Who throng around them seem innumerable:
Dancing and drinking, jabbering, making love,
And cooking, are at work. Now tell me, friend,
What is there better in the world than this?

Faust. In introducing us, do you assume
The character of wizard or of devil?

Meph. In truth, I generally go about
In strict incognito; and yet one likes
To wear one's orders upon gala days.
I have no ribbon at my knee; but here
At home, the cloven foot is honourable.
See you that snail there?—she comes creeping up,
And with her feeling eyes hath smelt out something
I could not, if I would, mask myself here.
Come now, we'll go about from fire to fire:
I'll be the pimp, and you shall be the lover.

[*To some Old Women, who are sitting round a heap of glimmering coals.*

Old gentlewomen, what do you do out here?
You ought to be with the young rioters
Right in the thickest of the revelry—
But every one is best content at home.
General. Who dare confide in right or a just claim?
So much as I had done for them! and now—
With women and the people 'tis the same,
Youth will stand foremost ever,—age may go
To the dark grave unhonour'd.
Minister. Nowadays
People assert their rights: they go too far;
But as for me, the good old times I praise;
Then we were all in all, 'twas something worth
One's while to be in place and wear a star;
That was indeed the golden age on earth.
*Parvenu.** We too are active, and we did and do
What we ought not, perhaps; and yet we now
Will seize, whilst all things are whirl'd round and round,
A spoke of Fortune's wheel, and keep our ground.
Author. Who now can taste a treatise of deep sense
And ponderous volume? 'tis impertinence
To write what none will read, therefore will I
To please the young and thoughtless people try.
Meph. (*Who at once appears to have grown very old*). I
find the people ripe for the last day,
Since I last came up to the wizard mountain;
And as my little cask runs turbid now,
So is the world drain'd to the dregs.
Pedlar-Witch. Look here,
Gentlemen; do not hurry on so fast
And lose the chance of a good pennyworth.
I have a pack full of the choicest wares
Of every sort, and yet in all my bundle
Is nothing like what may be found on earth;
Nothing that in a moment will make rich

* A sort of fundholder.

Men and the world with fine malicious mischief—
There is no dagger drunk with blood; no bowl
From which consuming poison may be drain'd
By innocent and healthy lips; no jewel,
The price of an abandon'd maiden's shame;
No sword which cuts the bond it cannot loose,
Or stabs the wearer's enemy in the back;
No ——

Meph. Gossip, you know little of these times.
What has been, has been; what is done, is past.
They shape themselves into the innovations
They breed, and innovation drags us with it.
The torrent of the crowd sweeps over us,
You think to impel, and are yourself impell'd.

Faust. Who is that yonder?

Meph. Mark her well. It is Lilith.

Faust. Who?

Meph. Lilith, the first wife of Adam.
Beware of her fair hair, for she excels
All women in the magic of her locks;
And when she winds them round a young man's neck,
She will not ever set him free again.

Faust. There sit a girl and an old woman—they
Seem to be tired with pleasure and with play.

Meph. There is no rest to-night for any one:
When one dance ends another is begun;
Come, let us to it; We shall have rare fun.

[*Faust dances and sings with a Girl, and Mephistopheles with an Old Woman.*

Brocto-Phantasmist. What is this cursed multitude about?
Have we not long since proved to demonstration
That ghosts move not on ordinary feet?
But these are dancing just like men and women.

The Girl. What does he want then at our ball?
Faust. Oh! he
Is far above us all in his conceit:
Whilst we enjoy, he reasons of enjoyment;
And any step which in our dance we tread,
If it be left out of his reckoning,
Is not to be consider'd as a step.
There are few things that scandalize him not:
And when you whirl round in the circle now,
As he went round the wheel in his old mill,
He says that you go wrong in all respects,
Especially if you congratulate him
Upon the strength of the resemblance.
Brocto-Phant. Fly!
Vanish! Unheard of impudence! What, still there
In this enlighten'd age too, since you have been
Proved not to exist!—But this infernal brood
Will hear no reason and endure no rule.
Are we so wise, and is the *pond* still haunted?
How long have I been sweeping out this rubbish
Of superstition, and the world will not
Come clean with all my pains!—it is a case
Unheard of!
The Girl. Then leave off teasing us so.
Brocto-Phant. I tell you, spirits, to your faces now,
That I should not regret this despotism
Of spirits, but that mine can wield it not.
To-night I shall make poor work of it,
Yet I will take a round with you, and hope
Before my last step in the living dance
To beat the poet and the devil together.
Meph. At last he will sit down in some foul puddle;
That is his way of solacing himself;
Until some leech, diverted with his gravity,
Cures him of spirits and the spirit together.
[*To* FAUST, *who has seceded from the dance.*

Why do you let that fair girl pass from you,
Who sung so sweetly to you in the dance?
Faust. A red mouse in the middle of her singing
Sprung from her mouth.
Meph. That was all right, my friend,
Be it enough that the mouse was not grey.
Do not disturb your hour of happiness
With close consideration of such trifles.
Faust. Then saw I ——
Meph. What?
Faust. Seest thou not a pale,
Fair girl, standing alone, far, far away?
She drags herself now forward with slow steps,
And seems as if she moved with shackled feet:
I cannot overcome the thought that she
Is like poor Margaret.
Meph. Let it be—pass on—
No good can come of it—it is not well
To meet it—it is an enchanted phantom,
A lifeless idol; with its numbing look,
It freezes up the blood of man; and they
Who meet its ghastly stare are turn'd to stone,
Like those who saw Medusa.
Faust. Oh, too true!
Her eyes are like the eyes of a fresh corpse
Which no beloved hand has closed, alas!
That is the heart which Margaret yielded to me—
Those are the lovely limbs which I enjoy'd!
Meph. It is all magic, poor deluded fool;
She looks to every one like his first love.
Faust. Oh, what delight! what woe! I cannot turn
My looks from her sweet piteous countenance.
How strangely does a single blood-red line,
Not broader than the sharp edge of a knife,
Adorn her lovely neck!
Meph. Ay, she can carry

Her head under her arm upon occasion;
Perseus has cut it off for her. These pleasures
End in delusion.—Gain this rising ground,
It is as airy here as in a [ ]
And if I am not mightily deceived,
I see a theatre—What may this mean?

Attendant. Quite a new piece, the last of seven, for 'tis
The custom now to represent that number.
'Tis written by a Dilettante, and
The actors who perform are Dilettanti;
Excuse me, gentlemen; but I must vanish,
I am a Dilettante curtain-lifter.

FRAGMENTS.*

I.

SUMMER AND WINTER.

IT was a bright and cheerful afternoon,
Towards the end of the sunny month of June,
When the north wind congregates in crowds
The floating mountains of the silver clouds
From the horizon—and the stainless sky
Opens beyond them like eternity.
All things rejoiced beneath the sun; the weeds,
The river, and the corn-fields, and the reeds;
The willow leaves that glanced in the light breeze,
And the firm foliage of the larger trees.

It was a winter, such as when birds do die
In the deep forests; and the fishes lie
Stiffen'd in the translucent ice, which makes
Even the mud and slime of the warm lakes

* Printed in "The Keepsake," 1829.

A wrinkled clod, as hard as brick; and when,
Among their children, comfortable men
Gather about great fires, and yet feel cold,
Alas! then for the homeless beggar old!

II.

THE TOWER OF FAMINE.*

AMID the desolation of a city,
Which was the cradle, and is now the grave
Of an extinguish'd people; so that pity

Weeps o'er the shipwrecks of oblivion's wave,
There stands the Tower of Famine. It is built
Upon some prison homes, whose dwellers rave

With bread, and gold, and blood: pain, link'd to guilt,
Agitates the light flame of their hours,
Until its vital oil is spent or spilt:

There stands the pile, a tower amid the towers
And sacred domes; each marble-ribbed roof,
The brazen-gated temples, and the bowers

Of solitary wealth; the tempest-proof
Pavilions of the dark Italian air,
Are by its presence dimm'd—they stand aloof,

And are withdrawn—so that the world is bare,
As if a spectre wrapt in shapeless terror
Amid a company of ladies fair

Should glide and glow, till it became a mirror
Of all their beauty, and their hair and hue,
The life of their sweet eyes, with all its error,
Should be absorb'd, till they to marble grew.

* At Pisa there still exists the prison of Ugolino, which goes by the name of "La Torre della Fame:" in the adjoining building the galley slaves are confined. It is situated near the Ponte al Mare on the Arno.

III.

THE AZIOLA.

"DO you not hear the Aziola cry?
Methinks she must be nigh,"
Said Mary, as we sate
In dusk, ere stars were lit, or candles brought;
And I, who thought
This Aziola was some tedious woman,
Ask'd, "Who is Aziola?" How elate
I felt to know that it was nothing human,
No mockery of myself to fear or hate:
And Mary saw my soul,
And laugh'd, and said, "Disquiet yourself not;
'Tis nothing but a little downy owl."

Sad Aziola! many an eventide
Thy music I had heard
By wood and stream, meadow and mountain-side,
And fields and marshes wide,
Such as nor voice, nor lute, nor wind, nor bird,
The soul ever stirr'd;
Unlike, and far sweeter than them all.
Sad Aziola! from that moment I
Loved thee and thy sad cry.

THE

MASQUE OF ANARCHY.

A Poem.

BY PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

NOW FIRST PUBLISHED, WITH A PREFACE

BY LEIGH HUNT.

Hope is strong;
Justice and Truth their winged child have found.
REVOLT OF ISLAM.

LONDON:
EDWARD MOXON, 64, NEW BOND STREET.
1832.

PREFACE.

BY LEIGH HUNT.

THIS Poem was written by Mr. Shelley on occasion of the bloodshed at Manchester, in the year 1819. I was editor of the *Examiner* at that time, and it was sent to me to be inserted or not in that journal, as I thought fit. I did not insert it, because I thought that the public at large had not become sufficiently discerning to do justice to the sincerity and kind-heartedness of the spirit that walked in this flaming robe of verse. His charity was avowedly more than proportionate to his indignation; yet I thought that even the suffering part of the people, judging, not unnaturally, from their own feelings, and from the exasperation which suffering produces before it produces knowledge, would believe a hundredfold in his anger, to what they would in his good intention; and this made me fear that the common enemy would take advantage of the mistake to do them both a disservice. Mr. Shelley's writings have since aided the general progress of knowledge in bringing about a wiser period; and an effusion which would have got him cruelly misrepresented a few years back will now do unequivocal honour to his memory, and show everybody what a most considerate and kind, as well as fervent heart, the cause of the world has lost.

The poem, though written purposely in a lax and familiar measure, is highly characteristical of the author.

It has the usual ardour of his tone, the unbounded sensibility by which he combines the most domestic with the most remote and fanciful images, and the patience, so beautifully checking, and, in fact, produced by the extreme impatience of his moral feeling. His patience is the deposit of many impatiences, acting upon an equal measure of understanding and moral taste. His wisdom is the wisdom of a heart overcharged with sensibility, acquiring the profoundest notions of justice from the completest sympathy, and at once taking refuge from its pain, and working out its extremest purposes, in the adoption of a stubborn and loving fortitude which neutralizes resistance. His very strokes of humour, while they startle with their extravagance and even ghastliness, cut to the heart with pathos. The fourth and fifth stanzas, for instance, of this Poem, involve an allusion which becomes affecting from our knowing what he must have felt when he wrote it. It is to his children, who were taken from him by the late Lord Chancellor, under that preposterous law by which every succeeding age might be made to blush for the tortures inflicted on the opinions of its predecessor.

"Anarchy, the Skeleton," riding through the streets, and grinning and bowing on each side of him,

> As well as if his education
> Had cost ten millions to the nation,

is another instance of the union of ludicrousness with terror. Hope, looking "more like Despair," and laying herself down before his horses' feet to die, is a touching image. The description of the rise and growth of the Public Enlightenment,

> ——— upborne on wings whose grain
> Was as the light of sunny rain,

and producing "thoughts" as he went,

> As stars from night's loose hair are shaken,

till on a sudden the prostrate multitude look up,

> and ankle-deep in blood,
> Hope, that maiden most serene,
> Was walking with a quiet mien,

is rich with the author's usual treasure of imagery and splendid words. The sixty-third is a delicious stanza, producing a most happy and comforting picture in the midst of visions of blood and tumult. We see the light from its cottage window. The substantial blessings of Freedom are nobly described; and lastly, the advice given by the poet, the great national measure recommended by him, is singularly striking as a *political anticipation.* It advises what has since taken place, and what was felt by the grown wisdom of the age to be the only thing which *could* take place, with effect, as a final rebuke and nullification of the Tories; to wit, a calm, lawful, and inflexible preparation for resistance in the shape of a protesting multitude,—the few against the many,—the laborious and suffering against the spoilt children of monopoly,—Mankind against Tory-kind. It is true the poet recommends that there should be no active resistance, come what might; which is a piece of fortitude, however effective, which we believe was not contemplated by the Political Unions: yet, in point of the spirit of the thing, the success he anticipates has actually occurred, and after his very fashion; for there really has been no resistance, except by multitudinous protest. The Tories, however desirous they showed themselves to draw their swords, did not draw them. The battle was won without a blow.

Mr. Shelley's countrymen know how anxious he was for the advancement of the common good, but they have yet to become acquainted with his anxiety in behalf of this particular means of it—Reform. The first time I heard from him was upon the subject: it was before I knew him, and while he was a student at Oxford, in the

year 1811. So early did he begin his career of philanthropy! Mankind, and their interests, were scarcely ever out of his thoughts. It was a moot point when he entered your room, whether he would begin with some half-pleasant, half-pensive joke, or quote something Greek, or ask some question about public affairs. I remember his coming upon me when I had not seen him for a long time; and after grappling my hands with both his, in his usual fervent manner, sitting down, and looking at me very earnestly, with a deep though not melancholy interest in his face. We were sitting in a cottage study, with our knees to the fire, to which we had been getting nearer and nearer in the comfort of finding ourselves together; the pleasure of seeing him was my only feeling at the moment; and the air of domesticity about us was so complete that I thought he was going to speak of some family matter—either his or my own; when he asked me, at the close of an intensity of pause, what was "the amount of the National Debt."

I used to rally him on the apparent inconsequentiality of his manner upon these occasions; and he was always ready to carry on the joke, because he said that my laughter did not hinder my being in earnest. With deepest love and admiration was my laughter mixed, or I should not have ventured upon paying him the compliment of it.

I have now before me his corrected proof of an anonymous pamphlet which he wrote in the year 1817, entitled "A Proposal for Putting Reform to the Vote through the Country." The title-page of the proof is scrawled over with sketches of trees and foliage, which was a habit of his in the intervals of thinking, whenever he had pen or pencil in hand. He would indulge in it while waiting for you at an inn, or in a door-way, scratching his elms and oak-trees on the walls. He did them very spiritedly, and with what the painters

call a gusto, particularly in point of grace. If he had room, he would add a cottage, and a piece of water, with a sailing boat mooring among the trees. This was his *beau ideal* of a life, the repose of which was to be earned by zeal for his species, and warranted by the common good. What else the image of a boat brings to the memory of those who have lost him, I will not say, especially as he is still with us in his writings. But it is worth observing how agreeably this habit of sketching trees and bowers evinced the gentleness of my friend's nature, the longing he had for rest, and the smallness of his personal desires.

It has been hastily implied in a late notice of him, in a periodical work, that he was an aristocrat by disposition as well as birth ; a conclusion natural enough, even with intelligent men, who have been bred among aristocratical influences ; but it is a pity that any such persons should give it as their opinion, because it tends to confirm inferior understandings in a similar delusion, and to make the vulgarity of would-be refinement still more confident in its assumptions. It is acknowledged on all hands that Mr. Shelley's mind was not one to be measured by common rules,—not even by such as the vulgar, great or small, take for uncommon ones, or for cunning pieces of corporate knowledge snugly kept between one another. If there is anything which I can affirm of my beloved friend, with as much confidence as the fact of his being benevolent *and* a friend, it is that he was totally free from mistakes of this kind ; that he never for one moment confounded the claims of real and essential with those of conventional refinement ; or allowed one to be substituted for the other in his mind by any compromise of his self-love.

I will admit it to be *possible* that there were moments in which he might have been deceived in his estimation of people's manners, in consequence of those to which

he had been early accustomed; but the charge implied against him involves a conscious, or at least an habitual, preference of what are called high-bred manners, for their own sakes, apart from the natures of those who exhibited them, and to the disadvantage of those to whom they had not been taught. I can affirm that it is a total mistake, and that he partook of no such weakness. I have seen him indeed draw himself up with a sort of irrepressible air of dignified objection, when moral vulgarity was betrayed in his presence, whatever might have been the rank of the betrayer; but nobody could hail with greater joy and simplicity, or meet upon more equal grounds, the instinct of a real delicacy and good intention, come in what shape it might. Why should he have done otherwise? He was Shelley; and not merely a man of that name. What had ordinary high life, and its pretensions, and the getting together of a few people for the sake of giving themselves a little importance, to do with his universal affinities? It was finely said one day in my hearing by Mr. Hazlitt, when asked why he could not temporize a little now and then, or make a compromise with an untruth, that it was "not worth his while." It was not worth Mr. Shelley's while to be an aristocrat. His spirit was large enough to take ten aristocracies into the hollow of his hand, and look at them as I have seen him look at insects from a tree, certainly with no thought either of superiority or the reverse, but with a curious interest.

That quintessence of gentlemanly demeanour which was observable in Mr. Shelley, in drawing-rooms, when he was not over-thoughtful, was nothing but an exquisite combination of sense, moral grace, and habitual sympathy. It was more dignified than what is called dignity in others, because it was the heart of the thing itself, or intrinsic worth, graced by the sincerest idealism; and not a response made by imputed merit to the homage of

the imputers. The best conventional dignity could have no more come up to it than the trick of an occasion to the truth of a life.

But if an aristocracy of intellect and morals were required, he was the man for one of their leaders. High and princely was the example he could set to an aristocracy of a different sort.

The delight of talking about my friend has led me into a longer Preface than I intended to write. I did not think of detaining the reader so long from his Poem: —most probably, indeed, I have not detained him. If his Pamphlet was the work of an aristocrat, even in the passages where it recommends time to be given for the abolition of his class, he was surely the strangest republican of an aristocrat that ever existed, and had the oddest notions of what was puerile!

I shall not stop to inquire how far Mr. Shelley would have thought the feasibilities of improvement hastened by the events that have taken place of late years—events, one of them in particular (the Glorious Three Days) which it would have repaid him for all his endurances, had he lived to see.

And who shall say that he has not seen them? For if ever there was a man upon earth, of a more spiritual nature than ordinary, partaking of the errors and perturbations of his species, but seeing and working through them with a seraphical purpose of good, such an one was Percy Bysshe Shelley.

THE MASQUE OF ANARCHY.

I.

AS I lay asleep in Italy,
There came a voice from over the sea,
And with great power it forth led me
To walk in the visions of Poesy.

II.

I met Murder on the way—
He had a mask like Castlereagh—
Very smooth he look'd, yet grim;
Seven bloodhounds follow'd him:

III.

All were fat; and well they might
Be in admirable plight,
For one by one, and two by two,
He toss'd them human hearts to chew,
Which from his wide cloak he drew.

IV.

Next came Fraud, and he had on,
Like Lord E——, an ermined gown;
His big tears, for he wept well,
Turn'd to mill-stones as they fell;

V.

And the little children, who
Round his feet play'd to and fro,
Thinking every tear a gem,
Had their brains knock'd out by them.

VI.

Clothed with the * * as with light,
And the shadows of the night,
Like * * * next, Hypocrisy,
On a crocodile rode by.

VII.

And many more Destructions play'd
In this ghastly masquerade,
All disguised, even to the eyes,
Like bishops, lawyers, peers, or spies.

VIII.

Last came Anarchy; he rode
On a white horse, splash'd with blood;
He was pale even to the lips,
Like Death in the Apocalypse.

IX.

And he wore a kingly crown;
And in his grasp a sceptre shone;
And on his brow this mark I saw—
"I am God, and King, and Law!"

X.

With a pace stately and fast,
Over English land he past,
Trampling to a mire of blood
The adoring multitude.

XI.

And a mighty troop around,
With their trampling shook the ground,
Waving each a bloody sword,
For the service of their Lord.

XII.

And with glorious triumph, they
Rode through England proud and gay,
Drunk as with intoxication
Of the wine of desolation.

XIII.

O'er fields and towns, from sea to sea,
Pass'd the pageant swift and free,
Tearing up, and trampling down,
Till they came to London town.

XIV.

And each dweller, panic-stricken,
Felt his heart with terror sicken,
Hearing the tempestuous cry
Of the triumph of Anarchy.

XV.

For with pomp to meet him came,
Clothed in arms like blood and flame,
The hired murderers who did sing,
"Thou art God, and Law, and King.

XVI.

"We have waited, weak and lone,
For thy coming, Mighty One!
Our purses are empty, our swords are cold,
Give us glory, and blood, and gold."

XVII.

Lawyers and priests, a motley crowd,
To the earth their pale brows bow'd;
Like a bad prayer not over loud,
Whispering—"Thou art Law and God."

XVIII.

Then all cried with one accord,
"Thou art King, and God, and Lord;
Anarchy, to thee we bow,
Be thy name made holy now!"

XIX.

And Anarchy, the skeleton,
Bow'd and grinn'd to everyone,
As well as if his education,
Had cost ten millions to the nation.

XX.

For he knew the palaces
Of our kings were nightly his;
His the sceptre, crown, and globe,
And the gold-inwoven robe.

XXI.

So he sent his slaves before
To seize upon the Bank and Tower,
And was proceeding with intent
To meet his pension'd parliament,

XXII.

When one fled past, a maniac maid,
And her name was Hope, she said:
But she look'd more like Despair;
And she cried out in the air;

XXIII.

"My father Time is weak and grey
With waiting for a better day;
See how idiot-like he stands,
Fumbling with his palsied hands!

XXIV.

"He has had child after child,
And the dust of death is piled
Over every one but me—
Misery! oh, Misery!"

XXV.

Then she lay down in the street,
Right before the horses' feet,
Expecting with a patient eye,
Murder, Fraud, and Anarchy.

XXVI.

When between her and her foes
A mist, a light, an image rose,
Small at first, and weak and frail
Like the vapour of the vale:

XXVII.

Till, as clouds grow on the blast,
Like tower-crown'd giants striding fast,
And glare with lightnings as they fly,
And speak in thunder to the sky,

XXVIII.

It grew—a shape array'd in mail
Brighter than the viper's scale,
And upborne on wings whose grain
Was as the light of sunny rain.

XXIX.

On its helm, seen far away,
A planet, like the morning's, lay;
And those plumes it light rain'd through,
Like a shower of crimson dew.

XXX.

With step as soft as wind it pass'd
O'er the heads of men—so fast
That they knew the presence there,
And look'd—and all was empty air.

XXXI.

As flowers beneath the footstep waken,
As stars from night's loose hair are shaken,
As waves arise when loud winds call,
Thoughts sprung where'er that step did fall.

XXXII.

And the prostrate multitude
Look'd—and ankle-deep in blood,
Hope, that maiden most serene,
Was walking with a quiet mien:

XXXIII.

And Anarchy, the ghastly birth,
Lay dead earth upon the earth;
The Horse of Death, tameless as wind,
Fled, and with his hoofs did grind
To dust the murderers throng'd behind.

XXXIV.

A rushing light of clouds and splendour,
A sense, awakening and yet tender,
Was heard and felt—and at its close
These words of joy and fear arose:

XXXV.

(As if their own indignant earth,
Which gave the sons of England birth,
Had felt their blood upon her brow,
And shuddering with a mother's throe,

XXXVI.

Had turned every drop of blood
By which her face had been bedew'd
To an accent unwithstood,
As if her heart had cried aloud :)

XXXVII.

"Men of England, Heirs of Glory,
Heroes of unwritten story,
Nurslings of one mighty mother,
Hopes of her, and one another,

XXXVIII.

"Rise, like lions after slumber,
In unvanquishable number,
Shake your chains to earth like dew,
Which in sleep had fall'n on you.

XXXIX.

"What is Freedom? Ye can tell
That which Slavery is too well,
For its very name has grown
To an echo of your own.

XL.

"'Tis to work, and have such pay
As just keeps life from day to day
In your limbs, as in a cell
For the tyrants' use to dwell:

XLI.

"So that ye for them are made,
Loom, and plough, and sword, and spade;
With or without your own will, bent
To their defence and nourishment.

XLII.

"'Tis to see your children weak
With their mothers pine and peak,
When the winter winds are bleak:—
They are dying whilst I speak.

XLIII.

"'Tis to hunger for such diet,
As the rich man in his riot
Casts to the fat dogs that lie
Surfeiting beneath his eye.

XLIV.

"'Tis to let the Ghost of Gold
Take from toil a thousandfold,
More than e'er its substance could
In the tyrannies of old:

XLV.

"Paper coin—that forgery
Of the title deeds, which ye
Hold to something of the worth
Of the inheritance of Earth.

XLVI.

"'Tis to be a slave in soul,
And to hold no strong control
Over your own wills, but be
All that others make of ye.

XLVII.

"And at length when ye complain,
With a murmur weak and vain,
'Tis to see the tyrant's crew
Ride over your wives and you:—
Blood is on the grass like dew.

XLVIII.

"Then it is to feel revenge,
Fiercely thirsting to exchange
Blood for blood—and wrong for wrong:
DO NOT THUS, WHEN YE ARE STRONG.

XLIX.

"Birds find rest in narrow nest,
When weary of the winged quest;
Beasts find fare in woody lair,
When storm and snow are in the air.

L.

"Asses, swine, have litter spread,
And with fitting food are fed;
All things have a home but one:
Thou, oh Englishman, hast none!

LI.

"This is Slavery—savage men,
Or wild beasts within a den,
Would endure not as ye do:
But such ills they never knew.

LII.

"What art thou, Freedom? Oh! could Slaves
Answer from their living graves
This demand, tyrants would flee
Like a dream's dim imagery.

LIII.

"Thou art not, as impostors say,
A shadow soon to pass away,
A superstition, and a name,
Echoing from the caves of Fame.

LIV.

"For the labourer thou art bread,
And a comely table spread,
From his daily labour come,
In a neat and happy home.

LV.

"Thou art clothes, and fire, and food
For the trampled multitude:
No—in countries that are free
Such starvation cannot be,
As in England now we see.

LVI.

"To the rich thou art a check,
When his foot is on the neck
Of his victim; thou dost make
That he treads upon a snake.

LVII.

"Thou art Justice—ne'er for gold
May thy righteous laws be sold,
As laws are in England:—thou
Shield'st alike the high and low.

LVIII.

"Thou art Wisdom—Freedom never
Dreams that God will damn for ever
All who think those things untrue,
Of which priests make such ado.

LIX.

"Thou art Peace—never by thee
Would blood and treasure wasted be,
As tyrants wasted them, when all
Leagued to quench thy flame in Gaul.

LX.

"What if English toil and blood
Was pour'd forth, even as a flood!
It avail'd,—oh Liberty!
To dim—but not extinguish thee.

LXI.

"Thou art Love—the rich have kist
Thy feet, and like him following Christ,
Give their substance to the free,
And through the rough world follow thee.

LXII.

"Oh turn their wealth to arms, and make
War for thy beloved sake,
On wealth *and* war and fraud: whence they
Drew the power which is their prey.

LXIII.

"Science, and Poetry, and Thought,
Are thy lamps; they make the lot
Of the dwellers in a cot
So serene, they curse it not.

LXIV.

"Spirit, Patience, Gentleness,
All that can adorn and bless,
Art thou: let deeds, not words, express
Thine exceeding loveliness.

LXV.

"Let a great assembly be
Of the fearless, of the free,
On some spot of English ground,
Where the plains stretch wide around.

LXVI.

"Let the blue sky overhead,
The green earth, on which ye tread,
All that must eternal be,
Witness the solemnity.

LXVII.

"From the corners uttermost
Of the bounds of English coast;
From every hut, village, and town,
Where those who live and suffer, moan
For others' misery and their own:

LXVIII.

"From the workhouse and the prison,
Where pale as corpses newly risen,
Women, children, young, and old,
Groan for pain, and weep for cold;

LXIX.

"From the haunts of daily life,
Where is waged the daily strife
With common wants and common cares,
Which sow the human heart with tares;

LXX.

"Lastly, from the palaces,
Where the murmur of distress
Echoes, like the distant sound
Of a wind alive around;

LXXI.

"Those prison-halls of wealth and fashion,
Where some few feel such compassion
For those who groan, and toil, and wail,
As must make their brethren pale;

LXXII.

"Ye who suffer woes untold,
Or to feel, or to behold
Your lost country bought and sold
With a price of blood and gold;

LXXIII.

"Let a vast assembly be,
And with great solemnity
Declare with measured words, that ye
Are, as God has made ye, free!

LXXIV.

"Be your strong and simple words
Keen to wound as sharpen'd swords,
And wide as targes let them be,
With their shade to cover ye.

LXXV.

"Let the tyrants pour around
With a quick and startling sound,
Like the loosening of a sea,
Troops of arm'd emblazonry.

LXXVI.

"Let the charged artillery drive,
Till the dead air seems alive
With the clash of clanging wheels,
And the tramp of horses' heels.

LXXVII.

"Let the fixed bayonet
Gleam with sharp desire to wet
Its bright point in English blood,
Looking keen as one for food.

LXXVIII.

"Let the horsemen's scimitars
Wheel and flash, like sphereless stars,
Thirsting to eclipse their burning
In a sea of death and mourning.

LXXIX.

"Stand ye calm and resolute,
Like a forest close and mute,
With folded arms, and looks which are
Weapons of an unvanquish'd war.

LXXX.

"And let Panic, who outspeeds
The career of armed steeds,
Pass, a disregarded shade,
Thro' your phalanx undismay'd.*

LXXXI.

"*Let the laws of your own land,*
Good or ill, between ye stand,
Hand to hand, and foot to foot,
Arbiters of the dispute.

* The three stanzas next ensuing are printed in italics, not because they are better, or, indeed, so well written, as some of the rest, but as marking out the sober, lawful, and charitable mode of proceeding advocated and anticipated by this supposed reckless innovator. "*Passive obedience*" he certainly had not; but here follows a picture and a recommendation of "*non-resistance,*" in all its glory. The mingled emotion and dignity of it is admirably expressed in the second line of stanza eighty-five. Let churches militant read it, and blush to call the author no Christian!—[Note by LEIGH HUNT.]

LXXXII.

"The old laws of England—they
Whose reverend heads with age are grey,
Children of a wiser day;
And whose solemn voice must be
Thine own echo—Liberty!

LXXXIII.

"On those who first should violate
Such sacred heralds in their state,
Rest the blood that must ensue,
And it will not rest on you.

LXXXIV.

"And if then the tyrants dare,
Let them ride among you there;
Slash, and stab, and maim, and hew;
What they like, that let them do.

LXXXV.

"With folded arms and steady eyes,
And little fear and less surprise,
Look upon them as they stay
Till their rage has died away:

LXXXVI.

"Then they will return with shame,
To the place from which they came,
And the blood thus shed will speak
In hot blushes on their cheek:

LXXXVII.

"Every woman in the land
Will point at them as they stand—
They will hardly dare to greet
Their acquaintance in the street:

LXXXVIII.

"And the bold true warriors
Who have hugged Danger in wars
Will turn to those who would be free,
Ashamed of such base company:

LXXXIX.

"And that slaughter to the nation
Shall steam up like inspiration,
Eloquent, oracular,
A volcano heard afar:

XC.

"And these words shall then become
Like Oppression's thunder'd doom,
Ringing through each heart and brain,
Heard again—again—again:

XCI.

"Rise like lions after slumber
In unvanquishable NUMBER!
Shake your chains to earth, like dew
Which in sleep had fall'n on you:
YE ARE MANY—THEY ARE FEW."

The Shelley Papers.

ORIGINAL POEMS AND PAPERS

BY PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

NOW FIRST COLLECTED.

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THE SHELLEY PAPERS.

INVOCATION TO MISERY.

COME, be happy !—sit by me,
Shadow-vested Misery :
Coy, unwilling, silent bride,
Mourning in thy robe of pride,
Desolation—deified !

Come, be happy !—sit near me :
Sad as I may seem to thee,
I am happier far than thou,
Lady, whose imperial brow
Is endiadem'd with woe.

Misery ! we have known each other,
Like a sister and a brother
Living in the same lone home,
Many years—we must live some
Years and ages yet to come.

'Tis an evil lot, and yet
Let us make the most of it ;
If love lives when pleasure dies,
We will love, till in our eyes
This heart's Hell seem Paradise,

Come, be happy !—lie thee down
On the fresh grass newly mown,
Where the Grasshopper doth sing
Merrily—one joyous thing
In a world of sorrowing !

There our tent shall be the willow,
And thine arm shall be my pillow ;
Sounds and odours sorrowful
Because they once were sweet, shall lull
Us to slumber, deep and dull.

Ha ! thy frozen pulses flutter
With a love thou darest not utter.

* * * * *

Thou art murmuring, thou art weeping,
Whilst my burning bosom's leaping.

Kiss me ;—oh ! thy lips are cold :
Round my neck thine arms enfold—
They are soft, but chill and dead ;
And thy tears upon my head
Burn like points of frozen lead.

Hasten to the bridal bed—
Underneath the grave 'tis spread :
In darkness may our love be hid,
Oblivion be our coverlid—
We may rest, and none forbid.

Clasp me till our hearts be grown
Like two lovers into one ;
Till this dreadful transport may
Like a vapour fade away,
In the sleep that lasts alway.

We may dream, in that long sleep,
That we are not those who weep;
E'en as pleasure dreams of thee,
Life-deserting Misery,
Thou mayst dream of her with me.

Let us laugh, and make our mirth,
At the shadows of the earth,
As dogs bay the moonlight clouds,
That, like spectres wrapt in shrouds,
Pass o'er night in multitudes.

All the wide world beside us
Are like multitudinous
Shadows shifting from a scene—
What but mockery may they mean?
Where am I?—Where thou hast been.

AN ARIETTE FOR MUSIC.

TO A LADY SINGING TO HER ACCOMPANIMENT ON THE GUITAR.

AS the moon's soft splendour
O'er the faint cold starlight of heaven
Is thrown,
So thy voice most tender
To the strings without soul has given
Its own.

The stars will awaken,
Though the moon sleep a full hour later
To-night:
No leaf will be shaken
Whilst the dews of thy melody scatter
Delight.

Though the sound overpowers,
Sing again, with thy sweet voice revealing
A tone
Of some world far from ours,
Where music and moonlight and feeling
Are one.

[*Note.*—This Ariette has been very beautifully set to music by Mr. Henry Lincoln.]

LINES

WRITTEN DURING THE CASTLEREAGH ADMINISTRATION.

CORPSES are cold in the tomb;
Stones on the pavement are dumb;
Abortions are dead in the womb,—
And their mothers look pale, like the white shore
Of Albion, free no more!

Her sons are as stones in the way;
They are masses of senseless clay;
They are trodden, and move not away;—
The abortion with which she travaileth,
Is Liberty, smitten to death.

Then trample and dance, thou Oppressor!
For thy victim is no redresser;
Thou art sole lord and possessor
Of her corpses, and clods, and abortions—they
pave
Thy path to the grave.

Hearest thou the festal din
Of Death, and Destruction, and Sin,
And wealth crying *Havock!* within?
'Tis the Bacchanal triumph which makes truth
dumb—
Thine Epithalamium!

Ay, marry thy ghastly wife !
Let Fear, and Disgust, and Strife,
Spread thy couch in the chamber of Life:
Marry Ruin, thou Tyrant ! and God be thy guide
To the bed of thy *bride !*

WITH A GUITAR.

THE artist who this idol wrought,
To echo all harmonious thought,
Fell'd a tree, while on the steep
The winds were in their winter sleep,
Rock'd in that repose divine
On the wind-swept Apennine ;
And dreaming some of Autumn past
And some of Spring approaching fast,
And some of April buds and showers,
And some of songs in July bowers,
And all of love ; and so this tree,—
O that such our death may be !—
Died in sleep, and felt no pain,
To live in happier form again ;
From which, beneath Heaven's fairest star,
The artist wrought that loved Guitar,
And taught it justly to reply
To all who question skilfully,
In language gentle as its own,
Whispering in enamour'd tone
Sweet oracles of woods and dells,
And summer winds in sylvan cells ;
For it had learnt all harmonies
Of the plains and of the skies,
Of the forests and the mountains,
And the many-voiced fountains ;

The clearest echoes of the hills,
The softest notes of falling rills,
The melodies of birds and bees,
The murmuring of summer seas,
And pattering rain, and breathing dew,
And airs of evening ; and it knew
That seldom-heard mysterious sound,
Which, driven in its diurnal round,
As it floats through boundless day,
Our world enkindles on its way—
All this it knows, but will not tell
To those who cannot question well
The spirit that inhabits it.
It talks according to the wit
Of its companions ; and no more
Is heard than has been felt before,
By those who tempt it to betray
These secrets of an elder day:
But sweetly as its answers will
Flatter hands of perfect skill,
It keeps its highest, holiest tone,
For our beloved friend alone.

THE MAGNETIC LADY TO HER PATIENT.

SLEEP on! sleep on! forget thy pain:
My hand is on thy brow,
My spirit on thy brain;
My pity on thy heart, poor friend;
And from my fingers flow
The powers of life, and like a sign,
Seal thee from thine hour of woe;
And brood on thee, but may not blend
With thine.

Sleep on! sleep on! I love thee not;
  But when I think that he
Who made and makes my lot
As full of flowers as thine of weeds,
  Might have been lost like thee;
And that a hand which was not mine,
  Might then have chased his agony
As I another's—my heart bleeds
    For thine.

Sleep, sleep, and with the slumber of
  The dead and the unborn:
Forget thy life and woe;
Forget that thou must wake for ever;
  Forget the world's dull scorn;
Forget lost health, and the divine
  Feelings that die in youth's brief morn;
And forget me, for I can never
    Be thine.

Like a cloud big with a May shower,
  My soul weeps healing rain
On thee, thou wither'd flower;
It breathes mute music on thy sleep;
  Its odour calms thy brain!
Its light within thy gloomy breast
  Speaks like a second youth again.
By mine thy being is to its deep
    Possest.

The spell is done. How feel you now?
  Better—Quite well, replied
The sleeper.—What would do
You good when suffering and awake?

What cure your head and side?—
'T would kill me what would cure my pain;
And as I must on earth abide
Awhile, yet tempt me not to break
My chain.

TO THE QUEEN OF MY HEART.

SHALL we roam, my love,
To the twilight grove,
When the moon is rising bright;
Oh, I'll whisper there,
In the cool night-air,
What I dare not in broad daylight!

I'll tell thee a part
Of the thoughts that start
To being when thou art nigh;
And thy beauty, more bright
Than the stars' soft light,
Shall seem as a weft from the sky.

When the pale moonbeam
On tower and stream
Sheds a flood of silver sheen,
How I love to gaze
As the cold ray strays
O'er thy face, my heart's throned queen!

Wilt thou roam with me
To the restless sea,
And linger upon the steep,
And list to the flow
Of the waves below
How they toss and roar and leap?

Those boiling waves
And the storm that raves
  At night o'er their foaming crest,
Resemble the strife
That, from earliest life,
  The passions have waged in my breast.

Oh, come then and rove
To the sea or the grove
  When the moon is rising bright,
And I'll whisper there
In the cool night-air
  What I dare not in broad daylight.

SIMILES.

AS from an ancestral oak
  Two empty ravens sound their clarion,
  Yell by yell, and croak by croak,
When they scent the noonday smoke
  Of fresh human carrion :—

As two gibbering night-birds flit
  From their bowers of deadly hue,
Through the night to frighten it,
When the moon is in a fit,
  And the stars are none, or few :—

As a shark and dog-fish wait
  Under an Atlantic isle,
For the negro-ship whose freight
Is the theme of their debate,
  Wrinkling their red gills the while—

Are ye, two vultures sick for battle,
  Two scorpions under one wet stone,
Two bloodless wolves whose dry throats rattle,
Two crows perch'd on the murrain'd cattle,
  Two vipers tangled into one.

THE WANDERING JEW:

A Poem.*

"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me."—*St. John*, xxi. 22.

CANTO I.

"Me miserable, which way shall I fly?
Infinite wrath and infinite despair—
Which way I fly is hell—myself am hell;
And in this lowest deep a lower deep,
To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven."

Paradise Lost.

THE brilliant orb of parting day
Diffused a rich and mellow ray,
Above the mountain's brow,
It tinged the hills with lustrous light,
It tinged the promontory's height,
Still sparkling with the snow;
And as aslant it threw its beam,
Tipt with gold the mountain stream
That laved the vale below;
Long hung the eye of glory there,
And linger'd as if loth to leave
A scene so lovely and so fair,
'Twere luxury even, there to grieve.
All, all was tranquil, all was still,
Save when the music of the rill,

* Originally printed in "Fraser's Magazine," July, 1831.

Or distant waterfall,
At intervals broke on the ear,
Which Echo's self was charm'd to hear,
And ceased her babbling call.

Light clouds in fleeting livery gay,
Hung, painted in grotesque array,
Upon the western sky:
Forgetful of the approaching dawn,
The peasants danced upon the lawn,
For the vintage time was nigh:
How jocund to the tabor's sound,
O'er the smooth, trembling turf they bound,
In every measure light and free,
The very soul of harmony;
Light as the dewdrops of the morn,
That hang upon the blossom'd thorn.

But see, what forms are those,
Scarce seen by glimpse of dim twilight,
Wandering o'er the mountain's height?
They swiftly haste to the vale below:
One wraps his mantle around his brow,
As if to hide his woes;
And as his steed impetuous flies,
What strange fire flashes from his eyes!
The far-off city's murmuring sound
Was borne on the breeze which floated around;
Noble Padua's lofty spire
Scarce glow'd with the sunbeam's latest fire,
Yet dash'd the travellers on—
Ere night o'er the earth was spread,
Full many a mile they must have sped,
Ere their destined course was run.

Welcome was the moonbeam's ray,
Which slept upon the towers so grey.

But, hark! a convent's vesper bell—
It seem'd to be a very spell—
The stranger check'd his courser's rein,
And listen'd to the mournful sound:
Listen'd—and paused—and paused again:
A thrill of pity and of pain
Through his inmost soul had past,
While gush'd the tear-drops silently and fast.

A crowd was at the convent gate,
The gate was open'd wide;
No longer on his steed he sate,
But mingled with the tide.
He felt a solemn awe and dread
As he the chapel entered.
Dim was the light from the pale moon beaming,
As it fell on the saint-cypher'd panes;
Or from the western window streaming,
Tinged the pillars with varied stains.
To the eye of enthusiasm strange forms were gliding
In each dusky recess of the aisle;
And indefined shades in succession were striding
O'er the coignes* of the gothic pile.

The altar illumined now darts its bright rays,
The train past in brilliant array;
On the shrine Saint Pietro's rich ornaments blaze,
And rival the brilliance of day.
Hark!—now the loud organ swells full on the ear—
So sweetly mellow, chaste, and clear;
Melting, kindling, raising, firing,
Delighting now, and now inspiring,
Peal upon peal the music floats—
Now they list still as death to the dying notes;
Whilst the soft voices of the choir
Exalt the soul from base desire;

* Buttress or coigne of 'vantage.—*Macbeth.*

Till it mounts on unearthly pinions free,
Dissolv'd in heavenly ecstasy.

Now a dead stillness reign'd around,
Uninterrupted by a sound;
Save when in deaden'd response ran
The last faint echoes down the aisle,
Reverberated through the pile,
As within the pale the holy man,
With voice devout and saintly look,
Slow chaunted from the sacred book,
Or pious prayers were duly said,
For spirits of departed dead.
With beads and crucifix and hood,
Close by his side the abbess stood;
Now her dark penetrating eyes
Were raised in suppliance to heaven;
And now her bosom heaved with sighs,
As if to human weakness given.
Her stern, severe, yet beauteous brow
Frown'd on all who stood below;
And the fire which flash'd from her steady gaze,
As it turn'd on the listening crowd its rays,
Superior virtue told,—
Virtue as pure as heaven's own dew,
But which, untainted, never knew,
To pardon weaker mould.
The heart though chaste and cold as snow—
'Twere faulty to be virtuous so.

Not a whisper now breathed in the pillar'd aisle—
The stranger advanced to the altar high—
Convulsive was heard a smother'd sigh!
Lo! four fair nuns to the altar draw near,
With solemn footstep, as the while
A fainting novice they bear—

The roses from her cheek are fled,
But there the lily reigns instead;
Nine graceful novices around
Fresh roses strew upon the ground:
In purest white array'd,
Nine spotless vestal virgins shed
Sabæn incense o'er the head
Of the devoted maid.

They dragg'd her to the altar's pale,
The traveller leant against the rail,
And gazed with eager eye,—
His cheek was flush'd with sudden glow,
On his brow sate a darker shade of woe,
As a transient expression fled by.

The sympathetic feeling flew
Thro' every breast from man to man,
Confused and open clamors ran,
Louder and louder still they grew;
When the abbess waved her hand,
A stern resolve was in her eye,
And every wild tumultuous cry
Was still'd at her command.

The Abbess made the well-known sign—
The novice reach'd the fatal shrine,
And mercy implored from the power divine;
At length she shriek'd aloud,
She dash'd from the supporting nun,
Ere the fatal rite was done,
And plunged amid the crowd.
Confusion reign'd throughout the throng,
Still the novice fled along,
Impell'd by frantic fear:
When the madden'd traveller's eager grasp

In firmest yet in wildest clasp
Arrested her career.
As fainting from terror she sank on the ground,
Her loosen'd locks floated her fine form around
The zone which confined her shadowy vest
No longer her throbbing bosom prest,
Its animation dead;
No more her feverish pulse beat high,
Expression dwelt not in her eye,
Her wilder'd senses fled.

* * * * * *

Hark! hark! the demon of the storm!
I see his vast expanding form
Blend with the strange and sulphurous glare
Of comets through the turbid air.
Yes, 'twas his voice, I heard its roar,
The wild waves lash'd the cavern'd shore
In angry murmurs hoarse and loud,
Higher and higher still they rise;
Red lightnings gleam from every cloud
And paint wild shapes upon the skies;
The echoing thunder rolls around,
Convulsed with earthquake rocks the ground.

The traveller yet undaunted stood,
He heeded not the roaring flood;
Yet Rosa slept, her bosom bare,
Her cheek was deadly pale,
The ringlets of her auburn hair
Stream'd in a lengthen'd trail,
And motionless her seraph form;
Unheard, unheeded raved the storm.
Whilst, borne on the wing of the gale,
The harrowing shriek of the white sea-mew
As o'er the midnight surge she flew;

The howlings of the squally blast
As o'er the beetling cliffs it past;
Mingled with the peals on high,
That, swelling louder, echo'd by,
Assailed the traveller's ear.
He heeded not the madden'd storm
As it pelted against his lofty form,
He felt no awe, no fear.
In contrast like the courser pale *
That stalks along Death's pitchy vale
With silent, with gigantic tread,
Trampling the dying and the dead.

Rising from her death-like trance,
Fair Rosa met the stranger's glance;
She started from his chilling gaze,
Wild was it as the tempest's blaze,
It shot a lurid gleam of light.
A secret spell of sudden dread,
A mystic, strange, and harrowing fear,
As when the spirits of the dead,
Drest in ideal shapes appear,
And hideous glance on human sight—
Scarce could Rosa's frame sustain
The chill that press'd upon her brain.

Anon that transient spell was o'er,
Dark clouds deform his brow no more,
But rapid fled away;
Sweet fascination dwelt around,
Mix'd with a soft, a silver sound,
As soothing to the ravish'd ear,
As what enthusiast lovers hear;
Which seems to steal along the sky,
When mountain mists are seen to fly,

* "Behold a pale horse, and his name that sat upon him was Death, and Hell followed with him."—*Revelations*, vi. 8.

Before the approach of day.
He seized on wondering Rosa's hand,
"And, ah!" cried he, "be this the band,
Shall join us, till this earthly frame,
Sinks convulsed in bickering flame—
When around the demons yell,
And drag the sinful wretch to hell,
Then, Rosa, will we part—
Then fate, and only fate's decree
Shall tear thy lovely soul from me,
And rend thee from my heart.
Long has Paulo sought in vain
A friend to share his grief;—
Never will he seek again,
For the wretch has found relief,
Till the Prince of Darkness bursts his chain,
Till death and desolation reign—
Rosa, wilt thou then be mine?
Ever fairest, I am thine!"

He ceased, and on the howling blast,
Which wildly round the mountain past,
Died his accents low;
Yet fiercely howl'd the midnight storm,
As Paulo bent his awful form,
And lean'd his lofty brow.

ROSA.

"Stranger, mystic stranger, rise;
Whence do these tumults fill the skies?
Who convey'd me, say, this night,
To this wild and cloud-capp'd height?
Who art thou? and why am I
Beneath Heaven's pitiless canopy?
For the wild winds roar around my head;
Lightnings redden the wave;—

Was it the power of the mighty dead,
Who live beneath the grave?
Or did the Abbess drag me here,
To make yon swelling surge my bier?"

PAULO.

"Ah, lovely Rosa! cease thy fear;
It was thy friend who bore thee here—
I, thy friend, till this fabric of earth,
Sinks in the chaos that gave it birth;
Till the meteor-bolt of the God above
Shall tear its victim from his love,—
That love which must unbroken last,
Till the hour of envious fate is past;
Till the mighty basements of the sky
In bickering hell-flames heated fly:
E'en then will I sit on some rocky height,
Whilst around lower clouds of eternal night,
E'en then will I loved Rosa save
From the yawning abyss of the grave;—
Or, into the gulf impetuous hurl'd—
If sinks, with its latest tenants, the world,
Then will our souls in union fly
Throughout the wide and boundless sky:
Then, free from th' ills that envious fate
Has heap'd upon our mortal state,
We'll taste ethereal pleasure,
Such as none but thou canst give,—
Such as none but I receive,
And rapture without measure."

As thus he spoke, a sudden blaze
Of pleasure mingled with his gaze:
Illumined by the dazzling light,
He glows with radiant lustre bright;
His features with new glory shine,
And sparkle as with beams divine.

"Strange, awful being," Rosa said,
"Whence is this superhuman dread,
That harrows up my inmost frame?
Whence does this unknown tingling flame
Consume and penetrate my soul?
By turns with fear and love possess'd,
Tumultuous thoughts swell high my breast;
A thousand wild emotions roll,
And mingle their resistless tide;
O'er thee some magic arts preside;
As by the influence of a charm,
Lull'd into rest my griefs subside,
And safe in thy protecting arm,
I feel no power can do me harm:
But the storm raves wildly o'er the sea—
Bear me away! I confide in thee!"

CANTO II.

"I COULD a tale unfold whose slightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres;
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine."—*Hamlet.*

The horrors of the mighty blast,
The lowering tempest clouds were past,
Had sunk beneath the wain;
Light baseless mists were all that fled
Above the weary traveller's head,
As he left the spacious plain.

Fled were the vapours of the night,
Faint streaks of rosy-tinted light
Were painted on the matin grey;
And as the sun began to rise,

To pour his animating ray,
Glow'd with his fire the eastern skies,
The distant rocks—the far-off bay.
The ocean's sweet and lovely blue,
The mountain's variegated breast,
Blushing with tender tints of dawn,
Or with fantastic shadows drest.
The waving wood, the opening lawn,
Rose to existence, walk'd anew,
In colours exquisite of hue.
Their mingled charms Victorio view'd,
And lost in admiration stood.

From yesternight how changed the scene,
When howl'd the blast o'er the dark cliff's side,
And mingled with the madden'd roar
Of the wild surge that lash'd the shore.
To-day—scarce heard the whispering breeze,
And still and motionless the seas,
Scarce heard the murmuring of their tide;
All, all is peaceful and serene.
Serenely on Victorio's breast
It breathed a soft and tranquil rest,
Which bade each wild emotion cease,
And hush'd the passions into peace.

Along the winding Po he went;
His footsteps to the spot were bent
Where Paulo dwelt, his wander'd friend,
For thither did his wishes tend.
Noble Victorio's race was proud,
From Cosmo's blood he came;
To him a wild untutor'd crowd
Of vassals in allegiance bow'd,
Illustrious was his name;
Yet vassals and wealth he scorn'd, to go
Unnoticed with a man of woe:

Gay hope and expectation sate,
Throned in his eager eye,
And ere he reach'd the castle gate,
The sun had mounted high.

Wild was the spot where the castle stood,
Its towers embosom'd deep in wood,
Gigantic cliffs with craggy steeps,
Rear'd their proud heads on high,
Their bases were wash'd by the foaming deeps,
Their summits were hid in the sky;
From the valley below they excluded the day,
That valley ne'er cheer'd by the sunbeam's ray;
Nought broke on the silence drear,
Save the hungry vultures darting by,
Or eagles yelling fearfully,
As they bore to the rocks their prey,
Or when the fell wolf ravening prowl'd,
Or the gaunt wild boar fiercely howl'd
His hideous screams on the night's dull ear.

Borne on pleasure's downy wing,
Downy as the breath of spring,
Not thus fled Paulo's hours away,
Though brighten'd by the cheerful day:
Friendship or wine, or softer love,
The sparkling eye, the foaming bowl,
Could with no lasting rapture move,
Nor still the tumults of his soul.
And yet there was in Rosa's kiss
A momentary thrill of bliss;
Oft the dark clouds of grief would fly,
Beneath the beam of sympathy;
And love and converse sweet bestow
A transient requiem from woe.—
Strange business and of import vast
On things which long ago were past

Drew Paulo oft from home;
Then would a darker, deeper shade,
By sorrow traced, his brow o'erspread,
And o'er his features roam.
Oft as they spent the midnight hour,
And heard the wintry wild winds rave
'Midst the roar and spray of the dashing wave,
Was Paulo's dark brow seen to lour.
Then, as the lamp's uncertain blaze
Shed o'er the hall its partial rays,
And shadows strange were seen to fall,
And glide upon the dusky wall,
Would Paulo start with sudden fear.
Why then unbidden gush'd the tear,
As he mutter'd strange words to the ear?—
Why frequent heaved the smother'd sigh?—
Why did he gaze on vacancy,
As if some strange form was near?
Then would the fillet of his brow
Fierce as a fiery furnace glow,
As it burn'd with red and lambent flame;
Then would cold shudderings seize his frame,
As gasping he labour'd for breath.
The strange light of his gorgon eye,
As frenzied and rolling dreadfully,
It glared with terrific gleam,
Would chill like the spectre gaze of death,
As conjured by feverish dream,
He seems o'er the sick man's couch to stand,
And shakes the dread lance in his skeleton hand.*

But when the paroxysm was o'er,
And clouds deform'd his brow no more,

* Nine or ten of the preceding lines, with some verbal differences, appear as a motto to the eighth chapter of *St. Irvyne.*—ED.

Would Rosa soothe his tumults dire,
Would bid him calm his grief,
Would quench reflection's rising fire,
And give his soul relief.
As on his form with pitying eye,
The ministering angel hung,
And wiped the drops of agony,
The music of her siren tongue
Lull'd forcibly his griefs to rest,
Like fleeting visions of the dead,
Or midnight dreams, his sorrows fled:
Waked to new life, through all his soul
A soft, delicious languor stole,
And, lapt in heavenly ecstasy,
He sank and fainted on her breast.

'Twas on an eve, the leaf was sere,
Howl'd the blast round the castle drear,
The boding night-bird's hideous cry
Was mingled with the warning sky;
Heard was the distant torrent's dash,
Seen was the lightning's dark red flash.
As it gleam'd on the stormy cloud;
Heard was the troubled ocean's roar,
As its wild waves lash'd the rocky shore;
The thunder mutter'd loud,
As wilder still the lightnings flew;
Wilder as the tempest blew,
More wildly strange their converse grew:

They talk'd of the ghosts of the mighty dead,
If, when the spark of life were fled,
They visited this world of woe?
Or, were it but a phantasy,
Deceptive to the feverish eye,
When strange forms flash'd upon the sight,
And stalk'd along at the dead of night?

Or if, in the realms above,
They still, for mortals left below,
Retain'd the same affection's glow,
In friendship or in love?
Debating thus, a pensive train,
Thought upon thought began to rise;
Her thrilling wild harp Rosa took;
What sounds in softest murmurs broke
From the seraphic strings!
Celestials borne on odorous wings,
Caught the dulcet melodies,
The life-blood ebb'd in every vein,
As Paulo listen'd to the strain.

SONG.

What sounds are those that float upon the air,
As if to bid the fading day farewell,--
What form is that so shadowy, yet so fair,
Which glides along the rough and pathless dell?

Nightly those sounds swell full upon the breeze,
Which seems to sigh as if in sympathy;
They hang amid yon cliff-embosom'd trees,
Or float in dying cadence through the sky.

Now rests that form upon the moonbeam pale,
In piteous strains of woe its vesper sings;
Now, now it traverses the silent vale,
Borne on transparent ether's viewless wings.

Oft will it rest beside yon abbey's tower,
Which lifts its ivy-mantled mass so high;
Rears its dark head to meet the storms that lour,
And braves the trackless tempests of the sky.

That form, the embodied spirit of a maid,
Forced by a perjured lover to the grave;
A desperate fate the madden'd girl obey'd,
And from the dark cliff plunged into the wave.

There the deep murmurs of the restless surge,
The mournful shriekings of the white sea-mew,
The warring waves, the wild winds sang her dirge,
And o'er her bones the dark red coral grew.

Yet though that form be sunk beneath the main,
Still rests her spirit where its vows were given;
Still fondly visits each loved spot again,
And pours its sorrows on the ear of Heaven.

That spectre wanders through the abbey dale,
And suffers pangs which such a fate must share;
Early her soul sank in death's darken'd vale,
And ere long all of us must meet her there.

She ceased, and on the listening ear
Her pensive accents died;
So sad they were, so softly clear,
It seem'd as if some angel's sigh
Had breathed the plaintive symphony;
So ravishingly sweet their close,
The tones awaken'd Paulo's woes;
Oppressive recollections rose,
And pour'd their bitter tide.

Absorb'd awhile in grief he stood;
At length he seem'd as one inspired,
His burning fillet blazed with blood—
A lambent flame his features fired.
"The hour is come, the fated hour;
Whence is this new, this unfelt power?—
Yes, I've a secret to unfold,
And such a tale as ne'er was told,
A dreadful, dreadful mystery!
Scenes, at whose retrospect e'en now,
Cold drops of anguish on my brow,
The icy chill of death I feel:
Wrap, Rosa, bride, thy breast in steel,

Thy soul with nerves of iron brace,
As to your eyes I darkly trace
My sad, my cruel destiny.

"Victorio, lend your ears, arise,
Let us seek the battling skies,
With o'er our heads the thunder crashing,
And at our feet the wild waves dashing;
As tempests, clouds, and billows roll,
In gloomy concert with my soul.
Rosa, follow me—
For my soul is join'd to thine,
And thy being's link'd to mine—
Rosa, list to me."

CANTO III.

"His form had not yet lost
All its original brightness, nor appear'd
Less than Archangel ruin'd, and the excess
Of glory obscured; but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and care
Sate on his faded cheek."—*Paradise Lost.*

PAULO.

"'Tis sixteeen hundred years ago,
Since I came from Israel's land;
Sixteen hundred years of woe!—
With deep and furrowing hand,
God's mark is painted on my head;
Must there remain until the dead
Hear the last trump and leave the tomb,
And earth spouts fire from her riven womb.

"As dread that day when borne along
To slaughter by the insulting throng,
Infuriate for Deicide,
I mock'd our Saviour, and I cried,
'Go, go.' 'Ah! I will go,' said he,

'Where scenes of endless bliss invite;
To the blest regions of the light
I go, but thou shalt here remain—
Thou diest not till I come again—
E'en now, by horror traced, I see
His perforated feet and hands;
The madden'd crowd around him stands.
Pierces his side the ruffian spear,
Big rolls the bitter anguish'd tear.
Hark, that deep groan!—he dies—he dies,
And breathes, in death's last agonies,
Forgiveness to his enemies.
Then was the noon-day glory clouded,
The sun in pitchy darkness shrouded;
Then were strange forms through the darkness gleaming,
And the red orb of night on Jerusalem beaming;
Which faintly, with ensanguined light,
Dispersed the thickening shades of night.
Convulsed, all nature shook with fear,
Earth trembled as if the end was near.
Rent was the Temple's vail in twain—
The graves gave up their dead again.

"'Twas then I felt the Almighty's ire—
Those words flash'd on my soul, my frame,
Scorch'd breast and brain as with a flame
Of unextinguishable fire!
By keen remorse and anguish driven,
I call'd for vengeance down from Heaven.
But ah! the all-wasting hand of Time,
Might never wear away my crime!
I scarce could draw my fluttering breath—
Was it the appalling grasp of death?
I lay entranced, and deem'd he shed
His dews of poppy o'er my head;

But though the kindly warmth was dead,
The self-inflicted torturing pangs
Of conscience lent their scorpion fangs,
Still life prolonging after life was fled.

"Methought, what glories met my sight,
As burst a sudden blaze of light,
Illumining the azure skies,
I saw the blessed Saviour rise.
But how unlike to him who bled!
Where then his thorn-encircled head?
Where the big drops of agony
Which dimm'd the lustre of his eye?
Or death-like hue that overspread
The features of that heavenly face?
Gone now was every mortal trace;
His eyes with radiant lustre beam'd—
His form confess'd celestial grace,
And with a blaze of glory stream'd.
Innumerable hosts around,
Their brows with wreaths immortal crown'd,
With amaranthine chaplets bound,
As on their wings the cross they bore,
Deep-dyed in the Redeemer's gore,
Attune their golden harps, and sing
Loud hallelujahs to their King.

"But, in an instant, from my sight,
Fled were the visions of delight.
Darkness had spread her raven pall,
Dank, lurid darkness cover'd all.
All was as silent as the dead;
I felt a petrifying dread,
Which harrow'd up my frame;
When suddenly a lurid stream
Of dark red light, with hideous gleam,
Shot like a meteor through the night,

And painted Hell upon the skies—
The Hell from whence it came.
What clouds of sulphur seem'd to rise!
What sounds were borne upon the air!
The breathings of intense despair—
The piteous shrieks—the wails of woe—
The screams of torment and of pain—
The red-hot rack—the clanking chain
I gazed upon the gulf below,
Till, fainting from excess of fear,
My tottering knees refused to bear
My odious weight. I sink—I sink!
Already had I reach'd the brink,
The fiery waves disported wide,
To plunge me in their sulphurous tide;
When, rack'd by agonizing pain,
I started into life again.

"Yet still the impression left behind
Was deeply graven on my mind,
In characters whose inward trace
No change or time could e'er deface;
A burning cross illumed my brow,
I hid it with a fillet grey,
But could not hide the wasting woe
That wore my wilder'd soul away,
And ate my heart with living fire.
I knew it was the avenger's sway,
I felt it was the avenger's ire!

"A burden on the face of earth,
I cursed the mother who gave me birth;
I cursed myself—my native land.
Polluted by repeated crimes,
I sought in distant foreign climes
If change of country could bestow
A transient respite from my woe.

Vain from myself the attempt to fly,
Sole cause of my own misery.

"Since, when in death-like trance I lay,
Past, slowly past, the years away,
That pour'd a bitter stream on me,
When once I fondly long'd to see
Jerusalem, alas! my native place,
Jerusalem, alas! no more in name,
No portion of her former fame
Had left behind a single trace.
Her pomp—her splendour was no more.
Her towers no longer seem to rise,
To lift their proud heads to the skies.
Fane and monumental bust,
Long levell'd even with the dust,
The holy pavements were stain'd with gore.
The place where the sacred temple stood
Was crimson-dyed with Jewish blood.
Long since my parents had been dead;
All my posterity had bled
Beneath the dark Crusader's spear,
No friend was left my path to cheer,
To shed a few last setting rays
Of sunshine on my evening days!

"How have I long'd to plunge beneath
The mansions of repelling death
Where earthly sorrows cease!
Oft have I rush'd to the towering height
Of the gigantic Teneriffe
Or some precipitous cliff,
All in the dead of the stormy night,
And flung me to the seas.
The substantial clouds that lower'd beneath,
Bore my detested form;

They whirl'd it above the volcanic breath,
And the meteors of the storm.
Hark to the thunder's awful crash!
Hark to the midnight lightning's hiss!
At length was heard a sullen dash,
Which made the hollow rocks around
Rebellow to the awful sound,
The yawning ocean opening wide,
Received me in its vast abyss,
And whelm'd me in its foaming tide—
My astounded senses fled!
Oh—would that I had waked no more,
But the wild surge swept my corpse ashore—
I was not with the dead!

"I cast myself in Etna's womb,
If haply I might meet my doom
In torrents of electric flame;
Thrice happy had I found a grave
'Mid fierce combustion's tumults dire,
'Mid oceans of volcanic fire,
Which whirl'd me in their sulphurous wave,
And scorch'd to a cinder my hated frame,
Parch'd up the blood within my veins,
And rack'd my breast with damning pains;
Then hurl'd me from the mountain's entrails dread.
With what unutterable woe
Even now I feel this bosom glow—
I burn—I melt with fervent heat—
Again life's pulses wildly beat—
What endless throbbing pangs I live to feel!
The elements respect their Maker's seal,—
That seal deep printed on my fated head.

"Still like the scathed pine-tree's height,
Braving the tempests of the night
Have I 'scaped the bickering fire,

Like the scathed pine which a monument stands
Of faded grandeur; which the brands
Of the tempest-shaken air
Have riven on the desolate heath,
Yet it stands majestic even in death,
And rears its wild form there.*
Thus have I 'scaped the ocean's roar,
The red-hot bolt from God's right hand,
The flaming midnight meteor brand,
And Etna's flames of bickering fire.
Thus am I doom'd by fate to stand,
A monument of the Eternal's ire;
Nor can this being pass away
Till time shall be no more.

"I pierce with intellectual eye
Into each hidden mystery;
I penetrate the fertile womb
Of nature; I produce to light
The secrets of the teeming earth,
And give air's unseen embryos birth:
The past, the present, and to come,
Float in review before my sight:
To me is known the magic spell
To summon e'en the Prince of Hell;
Awed by the Cross upon my head,
His fiends would obey my mandates dread,
To twilight change the blaze of noon,
And stain with spots of blood the moon.
But that an interposing hand
Restrains my potent arts, my else supreme
command."

He raised his passion-quivering hand,
He loosed the grey encircling band,

* The above ten or eleven lines are quoted, with little variation, as a motto to the tenth chapter of *St. Irvyne.*—ED.

A burning cross was there;
Its colour was like to recent blood,
Deep mark'd upon his brow it stood,
And spread a lambent glare.
Dimmer grew the taper's blaze,
Dazzled by the brighter rays,
Whilst Paulo spoke—'twas dead of night—
Fair Rosa shudder'd with affright;
Victorio, fearless, had braved death
Upon the blood-besprinkled heath;
Had heard, unmoved, the cannon's roar,
Echoing along the Wolga's shore.
When the thunder of battle was swelling,
When the birds for their dead prey were yelling,
When the ensigns of slaughter were streaming,
And falchions and bayonets were gleaming,
And almost felt death's chilling hand
Stretch'd on ensanguined Wolga's strand,
And, careless, scorn'd for life to cry.
Yet now he turn'd aside his eye,
Scarce could his death-like terror bear,
And own'd now what it was to fear.

"Once a funeral met my aching sight,
It blasted my eyes at the dead of night,
When the sightless fiends of the tempests rave,
And hell-birds howl o'er the storm-blacken'd wave.
Nought was seen, save at fits, but the meteor's glare,
And the lightnings of God painted hell on the air;
Nought was heard save the thunder's wild voice in the sky,
And strange birds who, shrieking, fled dismally by.
'Twas then from my head my drench'd hair that I tore,
And bade my vain dagger's point drink my life's gore;
'Twas then I fell on the ensanguined earth,
And cursed the mother who gave me birth!

My madden'd brain could bear no more—
Hark! the chilling whirlwinds roar;
The spirits of the tombless dead
Flit around my fated head,—
Howl horror and destruction round,
As they quaff my blood that stains the ground,
And shriek amid their deadly stave,—
'Never shalt thou find the grave!
Ever shall thy fated soul
In life's protracted torments roll,
Till, in latest ruin hurl'd,
And fate's destruction, sinks the world!
Till the dead arise from the yawning ground,
To meet their Maker's last decree,
Till angels of vengeance flit around,
And loud-yelling demons seize on thee!'

"Ah! would were come that fated hour,
When the clouds of Chaos around shall lower;
When the globe calcined by the fury of God
Shall sink beneath his wrathful nod!"

As thus he spake, a wilder gaze
Of fiend-like horror lit his eye,
With a most unearthly blaze,
As if some phantom-form pass'd by;
At last he still'd the maddening wail
Of grief, and thus pursued his tale:—

"Oft I invoke the fiends of hell,
And summon each in dire array—
I know they dare not disobey
My stern, my powerful spell.
—— Once on a night, when not a breeze
Ruffled the surface of the seas,
The elements were lull'd to rest,
And all was calm save my sad breast,
On death resolved—intent,

I mark'd a circle round my form;
About me sacred reliques spread,
The reliques of magicians dead,
And potent incantations read—
I waited their event.

"All at once grew dark the night,
Mists of swarthiness hung o'er the pale moonlight.
Strange yells were heard, the boding cry
Of the night raven that flitted by,
Whilst the silver-winged mew,
Startled with screams o'er the dark wave flew.
'Twas then I seized a magic wand,
The wand by an enchanter given,
And deep dyed in his heart's red blood.
The crashing thunder peal'd aloud;
I saw the portentous meteor's glare,
And the lightnings gleam o'er the lurid air;
I raised the wand in my trembling hand,
And pointed Hell's mark at the zenith of Heaven.

"A superhuman sound
Broke faintly on the listening ear,
Like to a silver harp the notes,
And yet they were more soft and clear.
I wildly strain'd my eyes around—
Again the unknown music floats.
Still stood Hell's mark above my head—
In wildest accents I summon'd the dead—
And through the insubstantial night,
It diffused a strange and fiendish light;
Spread its rays to the charnel-house air,
And mark'd mystic forms on the dark vapours there.
The winds had ceased—a thick dark smoke
From beneath the pavement broke;
Around ambrosial perfumes breathe
A fragrance grateful to the sense,

And bliss, past utterance, dispense.
The heavy mists encircling wreath
Disperse, and gradually unfold
A youthful female form ;—she rode
Upon a rosy-tinted cloud ;
Bright stream'd her flowing locks of gold ;
She shone with radiant lustre bright,
And blazed with strange and dazzling light.
A diamond coronet deck'd her brow,
Bloom'd on her cheek a vermeil glow ;
The terrors of her fiery eye
Pour'd forth insufferable day,
And shed a wildly lurid ray.
A smile upon her features play'd,
And there, too, sate portray'd
The inventive malice of a soul
Where wild demoniac passions roll ;
Despair and torment on her brow
Had mark'd a melancholy woe
In dark and deepen'd shade.
Under those hypocritic smiles,
Deceitful as the serpent's wiles,
Her hate and malice were conceal'd ;
Whilst on her guilt-confessing face,
Conscience, the strongly printed trace
Of agony betray'd,
And all the fallen angel stood reveal'd.
She held a poniard in her hand,
The point was tinged by the lightning's brand ;
In her left a scroll she bore,
Crimson'd deep with human gore ;
And as above my head she stood,
Bade me smear it with my blood.
She said, that then it was my doom
That every earthly pang should cease ;
The evening of my mortal woe

Would close beneath the yawning tomb;
And, lull'd into the arms of death,
I should resign my labouring breath;
And in the sightless realms below
Enjoy an endless reign of peace.
She ceased—oh! God! I thank thy grace,
Which bade me spurn the deadly scroll;
Uncertain for a while I stood—
The dagger's point was in my blood,
Even now I bleed!—I bleed!
When suddenly what horrors flew,
Quick as the lightnings, through my frame;
Flash'd on my mind the infernal deed,
The deed which would condemn my soul
To torments of eternal flame.
Drops colder than the cavern dew,
Quick coursed each other down my face,
I labour'd for my breath;
At length I cried, 'Avaunt! thou fiend of Hell,
Avaunt! thou minister of death!'
I cast the volume on the ground,
Loud shriek'd the fiend with piercing yell,
And more than mortal laughter peal'd around.
The scatter'd fragments of the storm
Floated along the demon's form,
Dilating till it touch'd the sky;
The clouds that roll'd athwart his eye,
Reveal'd by its terrific ray,
Brilliant as the noontide day,
Gleam'd with a lurid fire;
Red lightnings darted around his head,
Thunders hoarse as the groans of the dead,
Pronounced their Maker's ire;
A whirlwind rush'd impetuous by,
Chaos of horror fill'd the sky:
I sunk convulsed with awe and dread.

When I waked the storm was fled,
But sounds unholy met my ear,
And fiends of hell were flitting near.

"Here let me pause—here end my tale,
My mental powers begin to fail;
At this short retrospect I faint:
Scarce beats my pulse—I lose my breath,
I sicken even unto death.
Oh! hard would be the task to paint
And gift with life past scenes again;
To knit a long and linkless chain,
Or strive minutely to relate
The varied horrors of my fate.
Rosa! I could a tale disclose,
So full of horror—full of woes,
Such as might blast a demon's ear,
Such as a fiend might shrink to hear—
But, no."——

Here ceased the tale. Convulsed with fear,
The tale yet lived in Rosa's ear—
She felt a strange mysterious dread,
A chilling awe as of the dead;
Gleam'd on her sight the demon's form,
Heard she the fury of the storm?
The cries and hideous yells of death?
Totter'd the ground her feet beneath?
Was it the fiend before her stood?
Saw she the poniard drop with blood?
All seem'd to her distemper'd eye
A true and sad reality.

* * * * * *

CANTO IV.

Οὔτοι γυναῖκας, ἀλλὰ Γοργόνας λέγω·
οὐδ' αὖτε Γοργείοισιν εἰκάσω τύποις·
——— μέλαιναι δ' ἐς τὸ πᾶν βδελυκτροποι·
ῥέγκουσι δ'οὐ πλαστοῖσι φησιάμασιν·
ἐκ δ'ομμάτων λείβουσι δυσφιλῆ βίαν.
—*Æschylus, Eumenides*, v. 48.

"——— What are ye,
So wither'd and so wild in your attire,
That look not like th' inhabitants of earth,
And yet are on't?—Live you, or are you aught
That man may question?"—*Macbeth.*

Ah! why does man, whom God has sent
As the Creation's ornament,
Who stands amid his works confess'd
The first—the noblest—and the best;
Whose vast, whose comprehensive eye,
Is bounded only by the sky,
O'erlook the charms which Nature yields,
The garniture of woods and fields,
The sun's all vivifying light,
The glory of the moon by night,
And to himself alone a foe,
Forget from whom these blessings flow?
And is there not in friendship's eye,
Beaming with tender sympathy,
An antidote to every woe?
And cannot woman's love bestow
An heavenly paradise below?
Such joys as these to man are given,
And yet you dare to rail at Heaven;
Vainly oppose the Almighty Cause,
Transgress His universal laws;
Forfeit the pleasures that await

The virtuous in this mortal state;
Question the goodness of the Power on high,
In misery live, despairing die.
What then is man, how few his days,
And heighten'd by what transient rays:
The varying passions of his mind
Inconstant, varying as the wind;
Now hush'd to apathetic rest,
Now tempested with storms his breast;
Now with the fluctuating tide
Sunk low in meanness, swoln with pride;
Thoughtless, or overwhelm'd with care,
Hoping, or tortured by despair!

The sun had sunk beneath the hill,
Soft fell the dew, the scene was still;
All nature hail'd the evening's close.
Far more did lovely Rosa bless
The twilight of her happiness.
Even Paulo blest the tranquil hour,
As in the aromatic bower,
Or wandering through the olive grove,
He told his plaintive tale of love;
But welcome to Victorio's soul
Did the dark clouds of evening roll!
But ah! what means his hurried pace,
Those gestures strange, that varying face;
Now pale with mingled rage and ire,
Now burning with intense desire;
That brow where brood the imps of care,
That fix'd expression of despair,
That haste, that labouring for breath—
His soul is madly bent on death.
A dark resolve is in his eye,
Victorio raves—I hear him cry,
"Rosa is Paulo's eternally."

But whence is that soul-harrowing moan,
Deep drawn and half suppress'd—
A low and melancholy tone,
That rose upon the wind?
Victorio wildly gazed around,
He cast his eyes upon the ground,
He raised them to the spangled air,
But all was still—was quiet there.
Hence, hence this superstitious fear;
'Twas but the fever of his mind
That conjured the ideal sound,
To his distemper'd ear.

With rapid step, with frantic haste,
He scour'd the long and dreary waste;
And now the gloomy cypress spread
Its darken'd umbrage o'er his head;
The stately pines above him high,
Lifted their tall heads to the sky;
Whilst o'er his form the poisonous yew
And melancholy nightshade threw
Their baleful deadly dew.
At intervals the moon shone clear;
Yet passing o'er her disk, a cloud
Would now her silver beauty shroud.
The autumnal leaf was parch'd and sere;
It rustled like a step to fear,
The precipice's battled height
Was dimly seen through the mists of night,
As Victorio moved along.
At length he reach'd its summit dread,
The night-wind whistled round his head
A wild funereal song.
A dying cadence swept around
Upon the waste of air,
It scarcely might be call'd a sound,

For stillness yet was there,
Save when the roar of the waters below
Was wafted by fits to the mountain's brow.
Here for awhile Victorio stood
Suspended o'er the yawning flood,
And gazed upon the gulf beneath.
No apprehension paled his cheek,
No sighs from his torn bosom break,
No terror dimm'd his eye.
"Welcome, thrice welcome, friendly death"
In desperate harrowing tone he cried,
"Receive me, ocean, to your breast,
Hush this ungovernable tide,
This troubled sea to rest.
Thus do I bury all my grief—
This plunge shall give my soul relief,
This plunge into eternity!"
I see him now about to spring,
Into the watery grave:
Hark! the death angel flaps his wing
O'er the blacken'd wave.
Hark! the night-raven shrieks on high
To the breeze which passes on;
Clouds o'ershade the moonlight sky—
The deadly work is almost done—
When a soft and silver sound,
Softer than the fairy song
Which floats at midnight hour along
The daisy-spangled ground,
Was borne upon the wind's soft swell.
Victorio started—'twas the knell
Of some departed soul;
Now on the pinion of the blast,
Which o'er the craggy mountain past,
The lengthen'd murmurs roll—
Till lost in ether, dies away

The plaintive, melancholy lay.
'Tis said congenial sounds have power
To dissipate the mists that lower
Upon the wretch's brow—
To still the maddening passions' war—
To calm the mind's impetuous jar—
To turn the tide of woe.
Victorio shudder'd with affright,
Swam o'er his eyes thick mists of night;
Even now he was about to sink
Into the ocean's yawning womb,
But that the branches of an oak,
Which, riven by the lightning's stroke,
O'erhung the precipice's brink,
Preserved him from the billowy tomb.
Quick throbb'd his pulse with feverish heat,
He wildly started on his feet,
And rush'd from the mountain's height.

The moon was down, but thro' the air
Wild meteors spread a transient glare,
Borne on the wing of the swelling gale,
Above the dark and woody dale,
Thick clouds obscured the sky.
All was now wrapp'd in silence drear,
Not a whisper broke on the listening ear,
Not a murmur floated by.

In thought's perplexing labyrinth lost,
The trackless heath he quickly crost.
Ah! why did terror blanch his cheek?
Why did his tongue attempt to speak,
And fail in the essay?
Through the dark midnight mists, an eye,
Flashing with crimson brilliancy,
Pour'd on his face its ray.
What sighs pollute the midnight air?

What mean those breathings of despair?
Thus ask'd a voice, whose hollow tone
Might seem but one funereal moan.
Victorio groan'd, with faltering breath,
"I burn with love, I pant for death!"

Suddenly a meteor's glare,
With brilliant flash illumed the air;
Bursting through clouds of sulphurous smoke,
As on a Witch's form it broke:
Of herculean bulk her frame
Seemed blasted by the lightning's flame;
Her eyes that flared with lurid light,
Were now with bloodshot lustre fill'd.
They blazed like comets through the night,
And now thick rheumy gore distill'd;
Black as the raven's plume, her locks
Loose stream'd upon the pointed rocks;
Wild floated on the hollow gale,
Or swept the ground in matted trail;
Vile loathsome weeds, whose pitchy fold
Were blacken'd by the fire of Hell,
Her shapeless limbs of giant mould
Scarce served to hide—as she the while
"Grinn'd horribly a ghastly smile,"
And shriek'd with demon yell.

Terror unmann'd Victorio's mind,
His limbs like lime leaves in the wind,
Shook, and his brain in wild dismay
Swam—Vainly he strove to turn away.
"Follow me to the mansions of rest,"
The weird female cried;
The life-blood rush'd thro' Victorio's breast
In full and swelling tide.
Attractive as the eagle's gaze,
And bright as the meridian blaze,

Led by a sanguine stream of light,
He follow'd through the shades of night—
Before him his conductress fled,
As swift as the ghosts of the dead,
When on some dreadful errand they fly,
In a thunderblast sweeping the sky.

They reach'd a rock whose beetling height
Was dimly seen thro' the clouds of night;
Illumined by the meteor's blaze,
Its wild crags caught the redden'd rays,
And their refracted brilliance threw
Around a solitary yew,
Which stretch'd its blasted form on high,
Braving the tempests of the sky.
As glared the flame—a cavern'd cell,
More pitchy than the shades of hell,
Lay open to Victorio's view.
Lost for an instant was his guide;
He rush'd into the mountain's side.
At length, with deep and harrowing yell,
She bade him quickly speed,
For that ere again had risen the moon
'Twas fated that there must be done
A strange—a deadly deed.

Swift as the wind Victorio sped;
Beneath him lay the mangled dead;
Around dank putrefaction's power
Had caused a dim blue mist to lower.
Yet an unfix'd, a wandering light,
Dispersed the thickening shades of night
Yet the weird female's features dire
Gleam'd thro' the lurid yellow air;
With a deadly livid fire,
Whose wild, inconstant, dazzling light
Dispell'd the tenfold shades of night,

Whilst her hideous fiendlike eye,
Fix'd on her victim with horrid stare,
Flamed with more kindled radiancy;
More frightful far than that of Death,
When exulting he stalks o'er the battle heath;
Or of the dread prophetic form,
Who rides the curl'd clouds in the storm,
And borne upon the tempest's wings,
Death, despair, and horror brings.
Strange voices then and shrieks of death
Were borne along the trackless heath;
Totter'd the ground his steps beneath;
Rustled the blast o'er the dark cliff's side,
And their works unhallow'd spirits plied,
As they shed their baneful breath.

Yet Victorio hasten'd on—
Soon the dire deed will be done.
"Mortal," the female cried, "this night
Shall dissipate thy woe;
And, ere return of morning light,
The clouds that shade thy brow,
Like fleeting summer mists shall fly
Before the sun that mounts on high.
I know the wishes of thy heart—
A soothing balm I could impart:
Rosa is Paulo's—could be thine,
For the secret power is mine."

Victorio. "Give me that secret power—Oh! give
To me fair Rosa—I will live
To bow to thy command.
Rosa but mine—and I will fly
E'en to the regions of the sky,
Will traverse every land."

Witch. "Calm then those transports and attend,

Mortal, to one, who is thy friend—
The charm begins."
An ancient book
Of mystic characters she took;
Her loose locks floated on the air;
Her eyes were fix'd in lifeless stare:
She traced a circle on the floor,
Around dank chilling vapours lower;
A golden cross on the pavement she threw,
'Twas tinged with a flame of lambent blue,
From which bright scintillations flew;
By it she cursed her Saviour's soul;
Around strange fiendish laughs did roll,
A hollow, wild, and frightful sound,
At fits was heard to float around.
She utter'd then, in accents dread,
Some maddening rhyme that wakes the dead,
And forces every shivering fiend
To her their demon forms to bend;
At length, a wild and piercing shriek,
As the dark mists disperse and break,
Announced the coming Prince of Hell—
His horrid form obscured the cell.
Victorio shrunk, unused to shrink,
E'en at extremest danger's brink;
The witch then pointed to the ground,
Infernal shadows flitted around,
And with their prince were seen to rise,
The cavern bellows with their cries,
Which echoing through a thousand caves,
Sound like as many tempest waves.

Inspired and wrapt in bickering flame,
The strange, the awful being stood.
Words, unpremeditated came,
In unintelligible flood,

From her black, tumid lips,—array'd
In livid fiendish smiles of joy ;
Lips, which now dropp'd with deadly dew,
And now extending wide, display'd
Projecting teeth of mouldy hue,
As with a loud and piercing cry,
A mystic harrowing lay she sang,
Along the rocks a death-peal rang.
In accents hollow, deep, and drear,
They struck upon Victorio's ear.

A wilder, a more awful spell
Now echo'd through the long-drawn cell ;
The demon bow'd to its mandates dread.
"Receive this potent drug," he cried,
"Whoever quaffs its fatal tide,
Is mingled with the dead."
Swept by a rushing sulphurous blast,
Which wildly through the cavern past,
The fatal word was borne.
The cavern trembled with the sound,
Trembled beneath his feet the ground,
With strong convulsions torn,
Victorio, shuddering, fell ;
But soon awakening from his trance,
He cast around a fearful glance,
Yet gloomy was the cell,
Save where a lamp's uncertain flare
Cast a flickering, dying glare.

Witch. "Receive this dear-earn'd drug—its power
Thou, mortal, soon shalt know :
This drug shall be thy nuptial dower,
This drug shall seal thy woe.
Mingle it with Rosa's wine,
Victorio—Rosa then is thine."

She spake, and, to confirm the spell,
A strange and subterranean sound
Reverberated long around,
In dismal echoes—the dark cell
Rock'd as in terror—thro' the sky
Hoarse thunders murmur'd awfully,
And wing'd with horror, darkness spread
Her mantle o'er Victorio's head.
He gazed around with dizzy fear,
No fiend, no witch, no cave was near;
But the blasts of the forest were heard to roar,
The wild ocean's billows to dash on the shore.
The cold winds of Heaven struck chill on his frame;
For the cave had been heated by hell's blackening flame,
And his hand grasp'd a casket—the philtre was there!

* * * * * *

Sweet is the whispering of the breeze
Which scarcely sways yon summer trees;
Sweet is the pale moon's pearly beam,
Which sleeps upon the silver stream,
In slumber cold and still:
Sweet those wild notes of harmony,
Which on the blast that passes by,
Are wafted from yon hill:
So low, so thrilling, yet so clear,
Which strike enthusiast fancy's ear;
Which sweep along the moonlight sky,
Like notes of heavenly symphony.

SONG.

See yon opening flower
Spreads its fragrance to the blast;
It fades within an hour,
Its decay is pale, is fast.

Paler is yon maiden;
Faster is her heart's decay;
Deep with sorrow laden,
She sinks in death away.

* * * * * *

'Tis the silent dead of night——
Hark! hark! what shriek so low yet clear,
Breaks on calm rapture's pensive ear,
From Lara's castled height?
'Twas Rosa's death-shriek fell!
What sound is that which rides the blast,
As onward its fainter murmurs past?
'Tis Rosa's funeral knell!
What step is that the ground which shakes?
'Tis the step of a wretch, nature shrinks from his tread;
And beneath their tombs tremble the shuddering
dead;
And while he speaks the churchyard quakes.
Paulo. "Lies she there for the worm to devour?
Lies she there till the judgment hour?
Is then my Rosa dead?
False fiend! I curse thy futile power!
O'er her form will lightnings flash,
O'er her form will thunders crash,
But harmless from my head
Will the fierce tempest's fury fly,
Rebounding to its native sky.
Who is the God of Mercy?—where
Enthrones the power to save?
Reigns he above the viewless air?
Lives he beneath the grave?
To him would I lift my suppliant moan,
That power should hear my harrowing groan;
Is it then Christ's terrific Sire?
Ah! I have felt his burning ire,—

Wild anguish glooms my brow;
His flaming mark is fixed on my head,
And must there remain in traces dread;
I feel—I feel it now!"

As thus he spoke, grew dark the sky,
Hoarse thunders murmur'd awfully,
"O Demon! I am thine!" he cried,
A hollow, fiendish voice replied,
"Come! for thy doom is misery!"

NOTES TO "QUEEN MAB."

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The sun's unclouded orb
Roll'd through the black concave.

BEYOND our atmosphere the sun would appear a rayless orb of fire in the midst of a black concave. The equal diffusion of its light on earth is owing to the refraction of the rays by the atmosphere, and their reflection from other bodies. Light consists either of vibrations propagated through a subtle medium, or of numerous minute particles repelled in all directions from the luminous body. Its velocity greatly exceeds that of any substance with which we are acquainted: observations on the eclipses of Jupiter's satellites have demonstrated that light takes up no more than 8′ 7″ in passing from the sun to the earth, a distance of 95,000,000 miles. Some idea may be gained of the immense distance of the fixed stars, when it is computed that many years would elapse before light could reach this earth from the nearest of them; yet in one year light travels 5,422,400,000,000

miles, which is a distance 5,707,600 times greater than that of the sun from the earth.

Page 69.

Whilst round the chariot's way
Innumerable systems roll'd.

The plurality of worlds, the indefinite immensity of the universe is a most awful subject of contemplation. He who rightly feels its mystery and grandeur, is in no danger of seduction from the falsehoods of religious systems, or of deifying the principle of the universe. It is impossible to believe that the Spirit that pervades this infinite machine, begat a son upon the body of a Jewish woman; or is angered at the consequences of that necessity, which is a synonym of itself. All that miserable tale of the Devil, and Eve, and an Intercessor, with the childish mummeries of the God of the Jews, is irreconcilable with the knowledge of the stars. The works of his fingers have borne witness against him.

The nearest of the fixed stars is inconceivably distant from the earth, and they are probably proportionably distant from each other. By a calculation of the velocity of light, Sirius is supposed to be at least 54,224,000,000,000 miles from the earth.* That which appears only like a thin and silvery cloud streaking the heaven, is in effect composed of innumerable clusters of suns, each shining with its own light, and illuminating numbers of planets that revolve around them. Millions and millions of suns are ranged around us, all attended by innumerable worlds, yet calm, regular, and harmonious, all keeping the paths of immutable necessity.

* See Nicholson's Encyclopædia, art. Light.

Page 90.

These are the hired bravos who defend
The tyrant's throne.

To employ murder as a means of justice, is an idea which a man of an enlightened mind will not dwell upon with pleasure. To march forth in rank and file, and all the pomp of streamers and trumpets, for the purpose of shooting at our fellow-men as a mark; to inflict upon them all the variety of wound and anguish; to leave them weltering in their blood; to wander over the field of desolation, and count the number of the dying and the dead, —are employments which in thesis we may maintain to be necessary, but which no good man will contemplate with gratulation and delight. A battle we suppose is won:—thus truth is established;—thus the cause of justice is confirmed! It surely requires no common sagacity to discern the connexion between this immense heap of calamities, and the assertion of truth, or the maintenance of justice.

Kings, and ministers of state, the real authors of the calamity, sit unmolested in their cabinet, while those against whom the fury of the storm is directed, are, for the most part, persons who have been trepanned into the service, or who are dragged unwillingly from their peaceful homes into the field of battle. A soldier is a man whose business it is to kill those who never offended him, and who are the innocent martyrs of other men's iniquities. Whatever may become of the abstract question of the justifiableness of war, it seems impossible that the soldier should not be a depraved and unnatural being.

To these more serious and momentous considerations it may be proper to add a recollection of the ridiculousness of the military character. Its first constituent is obedience: a soldier is, of all descriptions of men, the most completely a machine; yet his profession inevitably

teaches him something of dogmatism, swaggering, and self-consequence: he is like the puppet of a showman who, at the very time he is made to strut and swell and display the most farcical airs, we perfectly know cannot assume the most insignificant gesture, advance either to the right or the left, but as he is moved by his exhibitor. —*Godwin's Enquirer, Essay V.*

I will here subjoin a little poem, so strongly expressive of my abhorrence of despotism and falsehood, that I fear lest it never again may be depictured so vividly. This opportunity is perhaps the only one that ever will occur of rescuing it from oblivion.

FALSEHOOD AND VICE.

A DIALOGUE.

Whilst monarchs laugh'd upon their thrones
To hear a famish'd nation's groans,
And hugg'd the wealth wrung from the woe
That makes its eyes and veins o'erflow,—
Those thrones, high built upon the heaps
Of bones where frenzied famine sleeps,
Where slavery wields her scourge of iron,
Red with mankind's unheeded gore,
And war's mad fiends the scene environ,
Mingling with skrieks a drunken roar,
There Vice and Falsehood took their stand,
High raised above the unhappy land.

Falsehood. Brother! arise from the dainty fare,
Which thousands have toil'd and bled to bestow;
A finer feast for thy hungry ear
Is the news that I bring of human woe.

Vice. And, secret one, what hast thou done,
To compare, in thy tumid pride, with me?
I, whose career, through the blasted year,
Has been track'd by despair and agony.

Falsehood. What have I done!—I have torn the robe
From baby truth's unshelter'd form,
And round the desolated globe
Borne safely the bewildering charm:
My tyrant-slaves to a dungeon-floor
Have bound the fearless innocent,
And streams of fertilizing gore
Flow from her bosom's hideous rent,
Which this unfailing dagger gave——
I dread that blood!—no more—this day
Is ours, though her eternal ray
Must shine upon our grave.
Yet know, proud Vice, had I not given
To thee the robe I stole from heaven,
Thy shape of ugliness and fear
Had never gain'd admission here.
Vice. And know, that had I disdain'd to toil,
But sate in my loathsome cave the while,
And ne'er to these hateful sons of heaven,
GOLD, MONARCHY, and MURDER given:
Hadst thou with all thine art essay'd
One of thy games then to have play'd,
With all thine overweening boast,
Falsehood! I tell thee thou hadst lost!—
Yet wherefore this dispute?—we tend,
Fraternal, to one common end;
In this cold grave beneath my feet,
Will our hopes, our fears, and our labours meet.
Falsehood. I brought my daughter, RELIGION, on earth:
She smother'd Reason's babes in their birth;
But dreaded their mother's eye severe,—
So the crocodile slunk off slily in fear,
And loosed her bloodhounds from the den——
They started from dreams of slaughter'd men,
And, by the light of her poison eye,
Did her work o'er the wide earth frightfully:

The dreadful stench of her torches' flare,
Fed with human fat, polluted the air:
The curses, the shrieks, the ceaseless cries
Of the many-mingling miseries,
As on she trod, ascended high
And trumpeted my victory!—
Brother, tell what thou hast done.

Vice. I have extinguish'd the noon-day sun,
In the carnage-smoke of battles won:
Famine, murder, hell, and power,
Were glutted in that glorious hour
Which searchless fate had stamp'd for me
With the seal of her security——
For the bloated wretch on yonder throne
Commanded the bloody fray to rise:
Like me he joy'd at the stifled moan
Wrung from a nation's miseries;
While the snakes, whose slime even him *defiled*,
In ecstasies of malice smiled:
They thought 'twas theirs,—but mine the deed!
Theirs is the toil, but mine the meed—
Ten thousand victims madly bleed.
They dream that tyrants goad them there
With poisonous war to taint the air:
These tyrants, on their beds of thorn,
Swell with the thoughts of murderous fame,
And with their gains to lift my name.
Restless they plan from night to morn:
I—I do all; without my aid
Thy daughter, that relentless maid,
Could never o'er a death-bed urge
The fury of her venom'd scourge.

Falsehood. Brother, well:—the world is ours;
And whether thou or I have won,
The pestilence expectant lours
On all beneath yon blasted sun.

Our joys, our toils, our honours meet
In the milk-white and wormy winding-sheet :
A short-lived hope, unceasing care,
Some heartless scraps of godly prayer,
A moody curse, and a frenzied sleep
Ere gapes the graves unclosing deep,
A tyrant's dream, a coward's start,
The ice that clings to a priestly heart,
A judge's frown, a courtier's smile,
Make the great whole for which we toil ;
And, brother, whether thou or I
Have done the work of misery,
It little boots : thy toil and pain,
Without my aid were more than vain ;
And but for thee I ne'er had sate
The guardian of heaven's palace gate.

Page 93.

Thus do the generations of the earth
Go to the grave, and issue from the womb.

One generation passeth away and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth for ever. The sun also ariseth and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. The wind goeth toward the south and turneth about unto the north, it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; unto the place whence the rivers come, thither shall they return again.—*Ecclesiastes*, chap. i.

Even as the leaves
Which the keen frost-wind of the waning year
Has scatter'd on the forest soil.

Οἵη περ φύλλων γενεὴ, τοιήδε καὶ ἀνδρῶν.
Φύλλα τὰ μέν τ' ἄνεμος χαμάδις χέει, ἄλλα δέ θ' ὕλη
Τηλεθόωσα φύει, ἔαρος δ' ἐπιγίγνεται ὥρη·
Ὣς ἀνδρῶν γενεὴ, ἡ μὲν φύει ἠδ' ἀπολήγει.

ΙΛΙΑΔ. Ζ'. l. 146.

The mob of peasants, nobles, priests, and kings.

Suave mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis
E terrâ magnum alterius spectare laborem;
Non quia vexari quemquam 'st jucunda voluptas,
Sed quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere suave 'st.
Suave etiam belli certamina magna tueri,
Per campos instructa, tua sine parte pericli;
Sed nil dulcius est bene quam munita tenere
Edita doctrina sapientum templa serena;
Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare atque viam palanteis quærere vitæ;
Certare ingenio; contendere nobilitate;
Nocteis atque dies niti præstante labore
Ad summas emergere opes, rerumque potiri.
O miseras hominum menteis! O pectora cæca!

Luc. lib. ii.

Page 95.

And statesmen boast
Of wealth!

There is no real wealth but the labour of man. Were the mountains of gold, and the valleys of silver, the world would not be one grain of corn the richer; no one comfort would be added to the human race. In conse-

quence of our consideration for the precious metals, one man is enabled to heap to himself luxuries at the expense of the necessaries of his neighbour; a system admirably fitted to produce all the varieties of disease and crime, which never fail to characterise the two extremes of opulence and penury. A speculator takes pride to himself as the promoter of his country's prosperity, who employs a number of hands in the manufacture of articles avowedly destitute of use, or subservient only to the unhallowed cravings of luxury and ostentation. The nobleman, who employs the peasants of his neighbourhood in building his palaces, until "*jam pauca aratro jugera, regiæ moles relinquunt,*" flatters himself that he has gained the title of a patriot by yielding to the impulses of vanity. The show and pomp of courts adduce the same apology for its continuance; and many a fête has been given, many a woman has eclipsed her beauty by her dress, to benefit the labouring poor and to encourage trade. Who does not see that this is a remedy which aggravates, whilst it palliates the countless diseases of society? The poor are set to labour,—for what? Not the food for which they famish: not the blankets for want of which their babes are frozen by the cold of their miserable hovels: not those comforts of civilization without which civilized man is far more miserable than the meanest savage; oppressed as he is by all its insidious evils, within the daily and taunting prospect of its innumerable benefits assiduously exhibited before him:—no; for the pride of power, for the miserable isolation of pride, for the false pleasures of the hundredth part of society. No greater evidence is afforded of the wide extended and radical mistakes of civilized man than this fact: those arts which are essential to his very being are held in the greatest contempt; employments are lucrative in an inverse ratio to their usefulness*: the

* See Rousseau, "De l'Inégalité parmi les Hommes," note 7.

jeweller, the toyman, the actor gains fame and wealth by the exercise of his useless and ridiculous art; whilst the cultivator of the earth, he without whom society must cease to subsist, struggles through contempt and penury, and perishes by that famine which, but for his unceasing exertions, would annihilate the rest of mankind.

I will not insult common sense by insisting on the doctrine of the natural equality of man. The question is not concerning its desirableness, but its practicability: so far as it is practicable, it is desirable. That state of human society which approaches nearer to an equal partition of its benefits and evils should, *cæteris paribus*, be preferred: but so long as we conceive that a wanton expenditure of human labour, not for the necessities, not even for the luxuries of the mass of society, but for the egotism and ostentation of a few of its members, is defensible on the ground of public justice, so long we neglect to approximate to the redemption of the human race.

Labour is required for physical, and leisure for moral improvement: from the former of these advantages the rich, and from the latter the poor, by the inevitable condition of their respective situations, are precluded. A state which should combine the advantages of both, would be subjected to the evils of neither. He that is deficient in firm health, or vigorous intellect, is but half a man: hence it follows, that, to subject the labouring classes to unnecessary labour, is wantonly depriving them of any opportunities of intellectual improvement; and that the rich are heaping up for their own mischief the disease, lassitude and *ennui* by which their existence is rendered an intolerable burthen.

English reformers exclaim against sinecures,—but the true pension-list is the rent-roll of the landed proprietors; wealth is a power usurped by the few, to compel the many to labour for their benefit. The laws which sup-

port this system derive their force from the ignorance and credulity of its victims: they are the result of a conspiracy of the few against the many, who are themselves obliged to purchase this pre-eminence by the loss of all real comfort.

The commodities that substantially contribute to the subsistence of the human species form a very short catalogue: they demand from us but a slender portion of industry. If these only were produced, and sufficiently produced, the species of man would be continued. If the labour necessarily required to produce them were equitably divided among the poor, and, still more, if it were equitably divided among all, each man's share of labour would be light, and his portion of leisure would be ample. There was a time when this leisure would have been of small comparative value: it is to be hoped that the time will come, when it will be applied to the most important purposes. Those hours which are not required for the production of the necessaries of life, may be devoted to the cultivation of the understanding, the enlarging our stock of knowledge, the refining our taste, and thus opening to us new and more exquisite sources of enjoyment.

* * * * * *

It was perhaps necessary that a period of monopoly and oppression should subsist, before a period of cultivated equality could subsist. Savages perhaps would never have been excited to the discovery of truth and the invention of art, but by the narrow motives which such a period affords. But, surely, after the savage state has ceased, and men have set out in the glorious career of discovery and invention, monopoly and oppression cannot be necessary to prevent them from returning to a

state of barbarism.—*Godwin's Enquirer, Essay II. See also Pol. Jus., book VIII. chap.* II.

It is a calculation of this admirable author, that all the conveniences of civilized life might be produced, if society would divide the labour equally among its members, by each individual being employed in labour two hours during the day.

Page 96.

Or religion
Drives his wife raving mad.

I am acquainted with a lady of considerable accomplishments, and the mother of a numerous family, whom the Christian religion has goaded to incurable insanity. A parallel case is, I believe, within the experience of every physician.

Nam jam sæpe homines patriam, carosque parentes
Prodiderunt, vitare Acherusia templa petentes.

LUCRETIUS.

Page 98.

Even love is sold.

Not even the intercourse of the sexes is exempt from the despotism of positive institution. Law pretends even to govern the indisciplinable wanderings of passion, to put fetters on the clearest deductions of reason, and, by appeals to the will, to subdue the involuntary affections of our nature. Love is inevitably consequent upon the perception of loveliness. Love withers under constraint: its very essence is liberty: it is compatible neither with obedience, jealousy, nor fear: it is there most pure, perfect, and unlimited, where its votaries live in confidence, equality, and unreserve.

How long then ought the sexual connexion to last? what law ought to specify the extent of the grievances

which should limit its duration? A husband and wife ought to continue so long united as they love each other: any law which should bind them to cohabitation for one moment after the decay of their affection, would be a most intolerable tyranny, and the most unworthy of toleration. How odious an usurpation of the right of private judgment should that law be considered, which should make the ties of friendship indissoluble, in spite of the caprices, the inconstancy, the fallibility, and capacity for improvement of the human mind. And by so much would the fetters of love be heavier and more unendurable than those of friendship, as love is more vehement and capricious, more dependent on those delicate peculiarities of imagination, and less capable of reduction to the ostensible merits of the object.

The state of society in which we exist is a mixture of feudal savageness and imperfect civilization. The narrow and unenlightened morality of the Christian religion is an aggravation of these evils. It is not even until lately that mankind have admitted that happiness is the sole end of the science of ethics, as of all other sciences; and that the fanatical idea of mortifying the flesh for the love of God has been discarded. I have heard, indeed, an ignorant collegian adduce, in favour of Christianity, its hostility to every worldly feeling!*

But if happiness be the object of morality, of all human unions and disunions; if the worthiness of every action

* The first Christian Emperor made a law by which seduction was punished with death; if the female pleaded her own consent, she also was punished with death; if the parents endeavoured to screen the criminals, they were banished and their estates were confiscated; the slaves who might be accessary were burned alive, or forced to swallow melted lead. The very offspring of an illegal love were involved in the consequences of the sentence.—*Gibbon's Decline and Fall*, &c., vol. ii., page 210. See also, for the hatred of the primitive Christians to love and even marriage, page 269.

is to be estimated by the quantity of pleasurable sensation it is calculated to produce, then the connexion of the sexes is so long sacred as it contributes to the comfort of the parties, and is naturally dissolved when its evils are greater than its benefits. There is nothing immoral in this separation. Constancy has nothing virtuous in itself, independently of the pleasure it confers; and partakes of the temporizing spirit of vice in proportion as it endures tamely moral defects of magnitude in the object of its indiscreet choice. Love is free: to promise for ever to love the same woman is not less absurd than to promise to believe the same creed: such a vow, in both cases, excludes us from all inquiry. The language of the votarist is this: The woman I now love may be infinitely inferior to many others; the creed I now profess may be a mass of errors and absurdities; but I exclude myself from all future information as to the amiability of the one, and the truth of the other, resolving blindly, and in spite of conviction, to adhere to them.—Is this the language of delicacy and reason? Is the love of such a frigid heart of more worth than its belief?

The present system of constraint does no more, in the majority of instances, than make hypocrites or open enemies. Persons of delicacy and virtue, unhappily united to one whom they find it impossible to love, spend the loveliest season of their life in unproductive efforts to appear otherwise than they are, for the sake of the feelings of their partner or the welfare of their mutual offspring: those of less generosity and refinement openly avow their disappointment, and linger out the remnant of that union, which only death can dissolve, in a state of incurable bickering and hostility. The early education of their children takes its colour from the squabbles of the parents; they are nursed in a systematic school of ill-humour, violence, and falsehood. Had they been suffered to part at the moment when indifference rendered their

union irksome, they would have been spared many years of misery: they would have connected themselves more suitably, and would have found that happiness in the society of more congenial partners which is for ever denied them by the despotism of marriage. They would have been, separately, useful and happy members of society, who, whilst united, were miserable, and rendered misanthropical by misery. The conviction that wedlock is indissoluble holds out the strongest of all temptations to the perverse: they indulge without restraint in acrimony, and all the little tyrannies of domestic life, when they know that their victim is without appeal. If this connexion were put on a rational basis, each would be assured that habitual ill-temper would terminate in separation, and would check this vicious and dangerous propensity.

Prostitution is the legitimate offspring of marriage and its accompanying errors. Women, for no other crime than having followed the dictates of a natural appetite, are driven with fury from the comforts and sympathies of society. It is less venial than murder; and the punishment which is inflicted on her who destroys her child to escape reproach, is lighter than the life of agony and disease to which the prostitute is irrecoverably doomed. Has a woman obeyed the impulse of unerring nature;—society declares war against her, pitiless and eternal war: she must be the tame slave, she must make no reprisals; theirs is the right of persecution, hers the duty of endurance. She lives a life of infamy: the loud and bitter laugh of scorn scares her from all return. She dies of long and lingering disease: yet *she* is in fault, *she* is the criminal, *she* the froward and untameable child,—and society, forsooth, the pure and virtuous matron, who casts her as an abortion from her undefiled bosom! Society avenges herself on the criminals of her own creation; she is employed in anathematizing the vice to-day, which yesterday she was the most zealous to

teach. Thus is formed one-tenth of the population of London. Meanwhile the evil is twofold: young men, excluded by the fanatical idea of chastity from the society of modest and accomplished women, associate with these vicious and miserable beings, destroying thereby all those exquisite and delicate sensibilities whose existence cold-hearted wordlings have denied; annihilating all genuine passion, and debasing that to a selfish feeling which is the excess of generosity and devotedness. Their body and mind alike crumble into a hideous wreck of humanity; idiotcy and disease become perpetuated in their miserable offspring, and distant generations suffer for the bigoted morality of their forefathers. Chastity is a monkish and evangelical superstition, a greater foe to natural temperance even than unintellectual sensuality; it strikes at the root of all domestic happiness, and consigns more than half of the human race to misery, that some few may monopolize according to law. A system could not well have been devised more studiously hostile to human happiness than marriage.

I conceive that, from the abolition of marriage, the fit and natural arrangement of sexual connexion would result. I by no means assert that the intercourse would be promiscuous: on the contrary; it appears, from the relation of parent to child, that this union is generally of long duration, and marked above all others with generosity and self-devotion. But this is a subject which it is perhaps premature to discuss. That which will result from the abolition of marriage, will be natural and right; because choice and change will be exempted from restraint.

In fact, religion and morality, as they now stand, compose a practical code of misery and servitude: the genius of human happiness must tear every leaf from the accursed book of God, ere man can read the inscription on his heart. How would morality, dressed up in stiff

stays and finery, start from her own disgusting image, should she look in the mirror of nature!

Page 102.

To the red and baleful sun
That faintly twinkles there.

The north polar star, to which the axis of the earth, in its present state of obliquity, points. It is exceedingly probable, from many considerations, that this obliquity will gradually diminish, until the equator coincides with the ecliptic: the nights and days will then become equal on the earth throughout the year, and probably the seasons also. There is no great extravagance in presuming that the progress of the perpendicularity of the poles may be as rapid as the progress of intellect; or that there should be a perfect identity between the moral and physical improvement of the human species. It is certain that wisdom is not compatible with disease, and that, in the present state of the climates of the earth, health, in the true and comprehensive sense of the word, is out of the reach of civilized man. Astronomy teaches us that the earth is now in its progress, and that the poles are every year becoming more and more perpendicular to the ecliptic. The strong evidence afforded by the history of mythology, and geological researches, that some event of this nature has taken place already, affords a strong presumption that this progress is not merely an oscillation, as has been surmised by some late astronomers.* Bones of animals peculiar to the torrid zone have been found in the north of Siberia, and on the banks of the river Ohio. Plants have been found in the fossil state in the interior of Germany, which demand the present climate of Hindostan for their production.† The researches of M.

* Laplace, Systême du Monde.

† Cabanis, Rapports du Physique et du Moral de l'Homme, vol. ii. p. 406.

Bailly * establish the existence of a people who inhabited a tract in Tartary, 49° north latitude, of greater antiquity than either the Indians, the Chinese, or the Chaldeans, from whom these nations derived their sciences and theology. We find, from the testimony of ancient writers, that Britain, Germany, and France, were much colder than at present, and that their great rivers were annually frozen over. Astronomy teaches us also, that since this period the obliquity of the earth's position has been considerably diminished.

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No atom of this turbulence fulfils
A vague and unnecessitated task,
Or acts but as it must and ought to act.

Deux exemples serviront à nous rendre plus sensible le principe qui vient d'être posé; nous emprunterons l'une du physique et l'autre du moral. Dans un tourbillon de poussière qu'éleve un vent impetueux, quelque confus qu'il paroisse à nos yeux; dans la plus affreuse tempête excité par des vents opposés qui soulèvent les flots, il n'y a pas une seule molécule de poussière ou d'eau qui soit placé au *hazard*, qui n'ait sa cause suffisante pour occuper le lieu où elle se trouve, et qui n'agisse rigoureusement de la manière dont elle doit agir. Une géomètre qui connoîtroit exactement les différentes forces qui agissent dans ces deux cas, et les propriétés des molécules qui sont mues, demontreroit que d'après des causes donnés, chaque molécule agit précisément comme elle doit agir, et ne peut agir autrement qu'elle ne fait.

Dans les convulsions terribles qui agitent quelquefois les sociétés politiques, et qui produisent souvent le ren-

* Lettres sur les Sciences, à Voltaire. Bailly.

versement d'un empire, il n'y a pas une seule action, une seule parole, une seule pensée, une seule volonté, une seule passion dans les agens qui concourent à la révolution comme destructeurs ou comme victimes, qui ne soit nécessaire, qui n'agisse comme elle doit agir, qui n'opère infailliblement les effets qu'elle doit opérer, suivant la place qu'occupent ces agens dans ce tourbillon moral. Cela paroîtroit évident pour une intelligence qui sera en état de saisir et d'apprécier toutes les actions et reactions des esprits et des corps de ceux qui contribuent à cette révolution.—*Systême de la Nature*, vol i. p. 44.

Page 106.

Necessity! thou mother of the world!

He who asserts the doctrine of Necessity, means that, contemplating the events which compose the moral and material universe, he beholds only an immense and uninterrupted chain of causes and effects, no one of which could occupy any other place than it does occupy, or act in any other place than it does act. The idea of necessity is obtained by our experience of the connexion between objects, the uniformity of the operations of nature, the constant conjunction of similar events, and the consequent inference of one from the other. Mankind are therefore agreed in the admission of necessity, if they admit that these two circumstances take place in voluntary action. Motive is, to voluntary action in the human mind, what cause is to effect in the material universe. The word liberty, as applied to mind, is analogous to the word chance, as applied to matter: they spring from an ignorance of the certainty of the conjunction of antecedents and consequents.

Every human being is irresistibly impelled to act precisely as he does act: in the eternity which preceded his birth, a chain of causes was generated, which, operating

under the name of motives, make it impossible that any thought of his mind, or any action of his life, should be otherwise than it is. Were the doctrine of Necessity false, the human mind would no longer be a legitimate object of science; from like causes it would be in vain that we should expect like effects; the strongest motive would no longer be paramount over the conduct; all knowledge would be vague and undeterminate; we could not predict with any certainty, that we might not meet as an enemy to-morrow, him with whom we have parted in friendship to-night; the most probable inducements and the clearest reasonings would lose the invariable influence they possess. The contrary of this is demonstrably the fact. Similar circumstances produce the same unvariable effects. The precise character and motives of any man on any occasion being given, the moral philosopher could predict his actions with as much certainty as the natural philosopher could predict the effects of the mixture of any particular chemical substances. Why is the aged husbandman more experienced than the young beginner? Because there is an uniform, undeniable necessity in the operations of the material universe. Why is the old statesman more skilful than the raw politician? Because, relying on the necessary conjunction of motive and action, he proceeds to produce moral effects, by the application of those moral causes which experience has shown to be effectual. Some actions may be found to which we can attach no motives, but these are the effects of causes with which we are unacquainted. Hence the relation which motive bears to voluntary action is that of cause to effect; nor, placed in this point of view, is it, or ever has it been the subject of popular or philosophical dispute. None but the few fanatics who are engaged in the herculean task of reconciling the justice of their God with the misery of man, will longer outrage common sense by the supposition of an event without a cause, a voluntary

action without a motive. History, politics, morals, criticism, all grounds of reasoning, all principles of science, alike assume the truth of the doctrine of Necessity. No farmer carrying his corn to market doubts the sale of it at the market price. The master of a manufactory no more doubts that he can purchase the human labour necessary for his purposes, than that his machinery will act as they have been accustomed to act.

But, whilst none have scrupled to admit necessity as influencing matter, many have disputed its dominion over mind. Independently of its militating with the received ideas of the justice of God, it is by no means obvious to a superficial inquiry. When the mind observes its own operations, it feels no connexion of motive and action: but as we know "nothing more of causation than the constant conjunction of objects and the consequent inference of one from the other, as we find that these two circumstances are universally allowed to have place in voluntary action, we may be easily led to own that they are subjected to the necessity common to all causes." The actions of the will have a regular conjunction with circumstances and characters; motive is, to voluntary action, what cause is to effect. But the only idea we can form of causation is a constant conjunction of similar objects, and the consequent inference of one from the other: wherever this is the case, necessity is clearly established.

The idea of liberty, applied metaphorically to the will, has sprung from a misconception of the meaning of the word power. What is power?—*id quod potest*, that which can produce any given effect. To deny power, is to say that nothing can or has the power to be or act. In the only true sense of the word power, it applies with equal force to the loadstone as to the human will. Do you think these motives, which I shall present, are powerful enough to rouse him? is a question just as

common as, Do you think this lever has the power of raising this weight? The advocates of free-will assert that the will has the power of refusing to be determined by the strongest motive: but the strongest motive is that which, overcoming all others, ultimately prevails; this assertion therefore amounts to a denial of the will being ultimately determined by that motive which does determine it, which is absurd. But it is equally certain that a man cannot resist the strongest motive, as that he cannot overcome a physical impossibility.

The doctrine of Necessity tends to introduce a great change into the established notions of morality, and utterly to destroy religion. Reward and punishment must be considered, by the Necessarian, merely as motives which he would employ in order to procure the adoption or abandonment of any given line of conduct. Desert, in the present sense of the word, would no longer have any meaning; and he, who should inflict pain upon another for no better reason than that he deserved it, would only gratify his revenge under pretence of satisfying justice. It is not enough, says the advocate of free-will, that a criminal should be prevented from a repetition of his crime: he should feel pain, and his torments, when justly inflicted, ought precisely to be proportioned to his fault. But utility is morality; that which is incapable of producing happiness is useless; and though the crime of Damiens must be condemned, yet the frightful torments which revenge, under the name of justice, inflicted on this unhappy man, cannot be supposed to have augmented, even at the long run, the stock of pleasurable sensation in the world. At the same time the doctrine of Necessity does not in the least diminish our disapprobation of vice. The conviction which all feel, that a viper is a poisonous animal, and that a tiger is constrained, by the inevitable condition of his existence, to devour men, does not induce

us to avoid them less sedulously, or, even more, to hesitate in destroying them: but he would surely be of a hard heart, who, meeting with a serpent on a desert island, or in a situation where it was incapable of injury, should wantonly deprive it of existence. A Necessarian is inconsequent to his own principles, if he indulges in hatred or contempt; the compassion which he feels for the criminal is unmixed with a desire of injuring him: he looks with an elevated and dreadless composure upon the links of the universal chain as they pass before his eyes; whilst cowardice, curiosity, and inconsistency, only assail him in proportion to the feebleness and indistinctness with which he has perceived and rejected the delusions of free-will.

Religion is the perception of the relation in which we stand to the principle of the universe. But if the principle of the universe be not an organic being, the model and prototype of man, the relation between it and human beings is absolutely none. Without some insight into its will respecting our actions, religion is nugatory and vain. But will is only a mode of animal mind; moral qualities also are such as only a human being can possess; to attribute them to the principle of the universe, is to annex to it properties incompatible with any possible definition of its nature. It is probable that the word God was originally only an expression denoting the unknown cause of the known events which men perceived in the universe. By the vulgar mistake of a metaphor for a real being, of a word for a thing, it became a man, endowed with human qualities and governing the universe as an earthly monarch governs his kingdom. Their addresses to this imaginary being, indeed, are much in the same style as those of subjects to a king. They acknowledge his benevolence, deprecate his anger, and supplicate his favour.

But the doctrine of Necessity teaches us, that in no

case could any event have happened otherwise than it did happen, and that, if God is the author of good, he is also the author of evil; that, if he is entitled to our gratitude for the one, he is entitled to our hatred for the other; that, admitting the existence of this hypothetic being, he is also subjected to the dominion of an immutable necessity. It is plain that the same arguments which prove that God is the author of food, light, and life, prove him also to be the author of poison, darkness, and death. The wide-wasting earthquake, the storm, the battle, and the tyranny, are attributable to this hypothetic being in the same degree as the fairest forms of nature, sunshine, liberty, and peace.

But we are taught, by the doctrine of Necessity, that there is neither good nor evil in the universe, otherwise than as the events to which we apply these epithets have relation to our own peculiar mode of being. Still less than with the hypothesis of a God, will the doctrine of Necessity accord with the belief of a future state of punishment. God made man such as he is, and then damned him for being so: for to say that God was the author of all good, and man the author of all evil, is to say that one man made a straight line and a crooked one, and another man made the incongruity.

A Mahometan story, much to the present purpose, is recorded, wherein Adam and Moses are introduced disputing before God in the following manner. Thou, says Moses, art Adam, whom God created, and animated with the breath of life, and caused to be worshipped by the angels, and placed in Paradise, from whence mankind have been expelled for thy fault. Whereto Adam answered, Thou art Moses, whom God chose for his apostle, and entrusted with his word, by giving thee the tables of the law, and whom he vouchsafed to admit to discourse

with himself. How many years dost thou find the law was written before I was created? Says Moses, Forty. And dost thou not find, replied Adam, these words therein, And Adam rebelled against his Lord and transgressed? Which Moses confessing, Dost thou therefore blame me, continued he, for doing that which God wrote of me that I should do, forty years before I was created, nay, for what was decreed concerning me fifty thousand years before the creation of heaven and earth?—*Sale's Prelim. Disc. to the Koran*, p. 164.

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There is no God!

This negation must be understood solely to affect a creative Deity. The hypothesis of a pervading Spirit coeternal with the universe, remains unshaken.

A close examination of the validity of the proofs adduced to support any proposition, is the only secure way of attaining truth, on the advantages of which it is unnecessary to descant: our knowledge of the existence of a Deity is a subject of such importance, that it cannot be too minutely investigated; in consequence of this conviction we proceed briefly and impartially to examine the proofs which have been adduced. It is necessary first to consider the nature of belief.

When a proposition is offered to the mind, it perceives the agreement or disagreement of the ideas of which it is composed. A perception of their agreement is termed *belief*. Many obstacles frequently prevent this perception from being immediate; these the mind attempts to remove, in order that the perception may be distinct. The

mind is active in the investigation, in order to perfect the state of perception of the relation which the component ideas of the proposition bear to each, which is passive: the investigation being confused with the perception, has induced many falsely to imagine that the mind is active in belief,—that belief is an act of volition, in consequence of which it may be regulated by the mind. Pursuing, continuing this mistake, they have attached a degree of criminality to disbelief, of which in its nature it is incapable: it is equally incapable of merit.

Belief, then, is a passion, the strength of which, like every other passion, is in precise proportion to the degrees of excitement.

The degrees of excitement are three.

The senses are the sources of all knowledge to the mind; consequently their evidence claims the strongest assent.

The decision of the mind, founded upon our own experience, derived from these sources, claims the next degree.

The experience of others, which addresses itself to the former one, occupies the lowest degree.

(A graduated scale, on which should be marked the capabilities of propositions to approach to the test of the senses, would be a just barometer of the belief which ought to be attached to them.)

Consequently no testimony can be admitted which is contrary to reason; reason is founded on the evidence of our senses.

Every proof may be referred to one of these three divisions: it is to be considered what arguments we receive from each of them, which should convince us of the existence of a Deity.

1st. The evidence of the senses. If the Deity should appear to us, if he should convince our senses of his

existence, this revelation would necessarily command belief. Those to whom the Deity has thus appeared have the strongest possible conviction of his existence. But the God of Theologians is incapable of local visibility.

2nd. Reason. It is urged that man knows that whatever is, must either have had a beginning, or have existed from all eternity: he also knows, that whatever is not eternal must have had a cause. When this reasoning is applied to the universe, it is necessary to prove that it was created: until that is clearly demonstrated, we may reasonably suppose that it has endured from all eternity. We must prove design before we can infer a designer. The only idea which we can form of causation is derivable from the constant conjunction of objects, and the consequent inference of one from the other. In a case where two propositions are diametrically opposite, the mind believes that which is least incomprehensible;—it is easier to suppose that the universe has existed from all eternity, than to conceive a being beyond its limits capable of creating it: if the mind sinks beneath the weight of one, is it an alleviation to increase the intolerability of the burthen?

The other argument, which is founded on a man's knowledge of his own existence, stands thus. A man knows not only that he now is, but that once he was not; consequently there must have been a cause. But our idea of causation is alone derivable from the constant conjunction of objects and the consequent inference of one from the other; and, reasoning experimentally, we can only infer from effects, causes exactly adequate to those effects. But there certainly is a generative power which is effected by certain instruments: we cannot prove that it is inherent in these instruments; nor is the contrary hypothesis capable of demonstration: we admit that the generative power is incomprehensible

but to suppose that the same effect is produced by an eternal, omniscient, omnipotent being, leaves the cause in the same obscurity, but renders it more incomprehensible.

3rd. Testimony. It is required that testimony should not be contrary to reason. The testimony that the Deity convinces the senses of men of his existence, can only be admitted by us, if our mind considers it less probable that these men should have been deceived, than that the Deity should have appeared to them. Our reason can never admit the testimony of men, who not only declare that they were eye-witnesses of miracles, but that the Deity was irrational; for he commanded that he should be believed, he proposed the highest rewards for faith, eternal punishments for disbelief. We can only command voluntary actions; belief is not an act of volition; the mind is even passive, or involuntarily active: from this it is evident that we have no sufficient testimony, or rather that testimony is insufficient to prove the being of a God. It has been before shown that it cannot be deduced from reason. They alone, then, who have been convinced by the evidence of the senses, can believe it.

Hence it is evident that, having no proofs from either of the three sources of conviction, the mind *cannot* believe the existence of a creative God: it is also evident, that, as belief is a passion of the mind, no degree of criminality is attachable to disbelief; and that they only are reprehensible who neglect to remove the false medium through which their mind views any subject of discussion. Every reflecting mind must acknowledge that there is no proof of the existence of a Deity.

God is an hypothesis, and, as such, stands in need of proof: the *onus probandi* rests on the theist. Sir Isaac Newton says: *Hypotheses non fingo, quicquid enim ex phœnomenis non deducitur, hypothesis vocanda est, et*

hypothesis vel metaphysicæ, vel physicæ, vel qualitatum occultarum, seu mechanicæ, in philosophiâ locum non habent. To all proofs of the existence of a creative God apply this valuable rule. We seè a variety of bodies possessing a variety of powers: we merely know their effects; we are in a state of ignorance with respect to their essences and causes. These Newton calls the phenomena of things; but the pride of philosophy is unwilling to admit its ignorance of their causes. From the phenomena, which are the objects of our senses, we attempt to infer a cause, which we call God, and gratuitously endow it with all negative and contradictory qualities. From this hypothesis we invent this general name, to conceal our ignorance of causes and essences. The being called God by no means answers with the conditions prescribed by Newton; it bears every mark of a veil woven by philosophical conceit, to hide the ignorance of philosophers even from themselves. They borrow the threads of its texture from the anthropomorphism of the vulgar. Words have been used by sophists for the same purposes, from the occult qualities of the peripatetics to the *effluvium* of Boyle and the *crinities* or *nebulæ* of Herschel. God is represented as infinite, eternal, incomprehensible; he is contained under every prædicate in non that the logic of ignorance could fabricate. Even his worshippers allow that it is impossible to form any idea of him: they exclaim with the French poet,

Pour dire ce qu'il est, il faut être lui-même.

Lord Bacon says, that "atheism leaves to man reason, philosophy, natural piety, laws, reputation, and everything that can serve to conduct him to virtue; but superstition destroys all these, and erects itself into a tyranny over the understandings of men: hence atheism never disturbs the government, but renders man more clear-

sighted, since he sees nothing beyond the boundaries of the present life."—*Bacon's Moral Essays.*

La première théologie de l'homme lui fit d'abord craindre et adorer les élémens même, des objets matériels et grossiers; il rendit ensuite ses hommages à des agens présidens aux élémens, à des génies inférieurs, à des héros, ou à des hommes doués de grands qualités. A force de réfléchir il crut simplifier les choses en soumettant la nature entière à un seul agent, à un esprit, à une âme universelle, qui mettoit cette nature et ses parties en mouvement. En remontant des causes en causes, les mortels ont fini par ne rien voir; et c'est dans cette obscurité qu'ils ont placé leur Dieu; c'est dans cette abîme ténébreux que leur imagination inquiète travaille toujours à se fabriquer des chimères, qui les affligeront jusqu'à ce que la connoissance de la nature les détrompe des fantômes qu'ils ont toujours si vainement adorés.

Si nous voulons nous rendre compte de nos idées sur la Divinité, nous serons obligés de convenir que, par le mot *Dieu*, les hommes n'ont jamais pu désigner que la cause la plus cachée, la plus éloignée, la plus inconnue des effets qu'ils voyoient: ils ne font usage de ce mot, que lorsque le jeu des causes naturelles et connues cesse d'être visible pour eux; dès qu'ils perdent le fil de ces causes, ou dès que leur esprit ne peut plus en suivre la chaîne, ils tranchent leur difficulté, et terminent leur recherches en appellant Dieu la dernière des causes, c'est-à-dire celle qui est au-delà de toutes les causes qu'ils connoissent; ainsi ils ne font qu'assigner une dénomination vague à une cause ignorée, à laquelle leur paresse ou les bornes de leurs connoissances les forcent de s'arrêter. Toutes les fois qu'on nous dit que Dieu est l'auteur de quelque phénomène, cela signifie qu'on ignore comment un tel phénomène a pu s'opérer par le sécours des forces ou des causes que nous connoissons dans la nature. C'est

ainsi que le commun des hommes, dont l'ignorance est le partage, attribue à la Divinité non seulement les effets inusités qui les frappent, mais encore les événemens les plus simples, dont les causes sont les plus faciles à connoître pour quiconque a pu les méditer. En un mot, l'homme a toujours respecté les causes inconnues des effets surprenans, que son ignorance l'empêchoit de démêler. Ce fut sur les débris de la nature que les hommes élevèrent le colosse imaginaire de la Divinité.

Si l'ignorance de la nature donna la naissance aux dieux, la connoissance de la nature est faite pour les detruire. A mésure que l'homme s'instruit, ses forces et ses ressources augmentent avec ses lumières; les sciences, les arts conservateurs, l'industrie, lui fournissent des secours; l'expérience le rassûre, ou lui procure des moyens de résister aux efforts de bien des causes qui cessent de l'alarmer dès qu'il les a connues. En un mot, ses terreurs se dissipent dans la même proportion que son esprit s'éclaire. L'homme instruit cesse d'être superstitieux.

Ce n'est jamais que sur parole que des peuples entiers adorent le Dieu de leurs pères et de leurs prêtres: l'autorité, la confiance, la soumission, et l'habitude leur tiennent lieu de conviction et de preuves; ils se prosternent et prient, parce que leurs pères leur ont appris à se prosterner et à prier: mais pourquoi ceux-ci se sont-ils mis à genoux? C'est que dans les temps éloignés leurs legislateurs et leurs guides leur en ont fait un devoir. "Adorez et croyez," ont-ils dit, "des dieux que vous ne pouvez comprendre; rapportez-vous en à notre sagesse profonde; nous en savons plus que vous sur la divinité." "Mais pourquoi m'en rapporterai-je à vous?" "C'est que Dieu le veut ainsi; c'est que Dieu vous punira si vous osez résister." "Mais ce Dieu n'est-il donc pas la chose en question?" Cependant les hommes se sont toujours payés de ce cercle vicieux; la paresse de leur esprit leur fit trouver

plus court de s'en rapporter au jugement des autres. Toutes les notions religieuses sont fondées uniquement sur l'autorité; toutes les religions du monde défendent l'examen et ne veulent pas que l'on raisonne; c'est l'autorité qui veut qu'on croie en Dieu; ce Dieu n'est lui-même fondé que sur l'autorité de quelques hommes qui prétendent le connoître, et venir de sa part pour l'annoncer à la terre. Un Dieu fait par les hommes a sans doute besoin des hommes pour se faire connoître au monde.

Ne seroit-ce donc que pour des prêtres, des inspirés, des métaphysiciens que seroit reservée la conviction de l'existence d'un Dieu, que l'on dit néanmoins si necessaire à tout le genre humain? Mais trouvons-nous de l'harmonie entre les opinions théologiques des différens inspirés, ou des penseurs répandus sur la terre? Ceux même qui font profession d'adorer le même Dieu, sont-ils d'accord sur son compte? sont-ils contents des preuves que leurs collègues apportent de son existence? Souscrivent-ils unanimement aux idées qu'ils présentent sur sa nature, sur sa conduite, sur la façon d'entendre ses prétendus oracles? Est-il une contrée sur la terre où la science de Dieu se soit réellement perfectionnée? A-t-elle pris quelque part la consistance et l'uniformité que nous voyons prendre aux connoissances humaines, aux arts les plus futiles, aux métiers les plus meprisés? les mots d'*esprit*, d'*immatérialité*, de *création*, de *prédestination*, de *grace*; cette foule de distinctions subtiles dont la théologie s'est partout remplie; dans quelques pays, ces inventions si ingénieuses, imaginées par des penseurs qui se sont succédés depuis tant de siècles, n'ont fait, helas! qu'embrouiller les choses, et jamais la science la plus nécessaire aux hommes n'a jusqu' ici pu acquérir la moindre fixité. Depuis des milliers d'années des rêveurs oisifs se sont perpétuellement relayés pour méditer la Divinité, pour deviner ses voies cachées, pour inventer des hypothèses

propres à développer cette énigme importante. Leur peu de succès n'a point découragé la vanité théologique ; toujours on a parlé de Dieu : on s'est disputé, l'on s'est égorgé pour lui, et cet être sublime demeure toujours le plus ignoré et le plus discuté.

Les hommes auroient été trop heureux, si se bornant aux objets visibles qui les intéressent, ils eussent employé à perfectionner leurs sciences réelles, leurs lois, leur morale, leur éducation, la moitié des efforts qu'ils ont mis dans leurs recherches sur la Divinité. Ils auroient été bien plus sages encore, et plus fortunés, s'ils eussent pu consentir à laisser leurs guides désœuvrés se quereller entre eux, et sonder des profondeurs capables de les étourdir, sans se mêler de leurs disputes insensées. Mais il est de l'essence de l'ignorance d'attacher de l'importance à ce qu'elle ne comprend pas. La vanité humaine fait que l'esprit se roidit contre les difficultés. Plus un objet se dérobe à nos yeux, plus nous faisons d'efforts pour le saisir, parce que dès-lors il aiguillone notre orgueil, il irrite notre curiosité, il nous paroît intéressant. En combattant pour son Dieu, chacun ne combattit en effet que pour les intérêts de sa propre vanité, qui de toutes les passions humaines est la plus prompte à s'alarmer, et la plus propre à produire de très grandes folies.

Si, écartant pour un moment les idées fâcheuses que la théologie nous donne d'un Dieu capricieux, dont les décrets partiaux et despotiques décident du sort des humains, nous ne voulons fixer nos yeux que sur la bonté prétendue, que tous les hommes, même en tremblant devant ce Dieu, s'accordent à lui donner ; si nous lui supposons le projet qu'on lui prête, de n'avoir travaillé que pour sa propre gloire, d'exiger les hommages des êtres intelligens ; de ne chercher dans ses œuvres que le bien-être du genre humain ; comment concilier ces vues et ces dispositions avec l'ignorance vraiment invincible dans laquelle ce Dieu, si glorieux et si bon, laisse la

plupart des hommes sur son compte? Si Dieu veut être connu, chéri, remercié, que ne se montre-t-il sous des traits favorables à tous ces êtres intelligens dont il veut être aimé et adoré? Pourquoi ne point se manifester à toute la terre d'une façon non équivoque, bien plus capable de nous convaincre, que ces révélations particulières qui semblent accuser la Divinité d'une partialité fâcheuse pour quelques-unes de ses créatures? Le tout-puissant n'auroit-il pas donc des moyens plus convaincans de se montrer aux hommes, que ces métamorphoses ridicules, ces incarnations prétendues, qui nous sont attestées par des écrivains si peu d'accord entre eux dans les récits qu'ils en font? Au lieu de tant de miracles, inventés pour prouver la mission divine de tant de législateurs, révérés par les différens peuples du monde, le souverain des esprits ne pouvoit-il pas convaincre tout d'un coup l'esprit humain des choses qu'il vouloit lui faire connoître? Au lieu de suspendre un soleil dans la voûte du firmament; au lieu de répandre sans ordre les étoiles, et les constellations qui remplissent l'espace, n'eut-il pas été plus conforme aux vues d'un Dieu si jaloux de sa gloire et si bien intentionné pour l'homme; d'écrire d'une façon non sujette à dispute, son nom, ses attributs, ses volontés permanentes, en caractères ineffaçables, et lisibles également pour tous les habitants de la terre? Personne alors n'auroit pu douter de l'existence d'un Dieu, de ses volontés claires, de ses intentions visibles. Sous les yeux de ce Dieu si sensible, personne n'auroit eu l'audace de violer ses ordonnances; nul mortel n'eût osé se mettre dans le cas d'attirer sa colère: enfin nul homme n'eût eu le front d'en imposer en son nom, ou d'interpréter ses volontés suivant ses propres fantaisies.

En effet, quand même on supposeroit l'existence du Dieu théologique, et la réalité des attributs si discordans qu'on lui donne, l'on ne peut en rien conclure, pour

autoriser la conduite ou les cultes qu'on prescrit de lui rendre. La théologie est vraiment *le tonneau des Danaïdes.* A force de qualités contradictoires et d'assertions hazardées, elle a, pour ainsi dire, tellement garroté son Dieu qu'elle l'a mis dans l'impossibilité d'agir. S'il est infiniment bon, quelle raison aurions-nous de le craindre? S'il est infiniment sage, de quoi nous inquiéter sur notre sort? S'il sait tout, pourquoi l'avertir de nos besoins, et le fatiguer de nos prières? S'il est partout, pourquoi lui élever des temples? S'il est le maître de tout, pourquoi lui faire des sacrifices et des offrandes? S'il est juste, comment croire qu'il punisse des créatures qu'il a remplies de foiblesses? Si la grace fait tout en elles, quelle raison auroit-il de les récompenser? S'il est tout-puissant, comment l'offenser, comment lui résister? S'il est raisonnable, comment se mettroit-il en colère contre des aveugles, à qui il a laissé la liberté de déraisonner? S'il est immuable, de quel droit prétendrions-nous faire changer ses décrets? S'il est inconcevable, pourquoi nous en occuper? S'IL A PARLÉ, POURQUOI L'UNIVERS N'EST-IL PAS CONVAINCU? Si la connoissance d'un Dieu est la plus nécessaire, pourquoi n'est-elle pas la plus évidente, et la plus claire.—*Système de la Nature, London,* 1781.

The enlightened and benevolent Pliny thus publicly professes himself an atheist:—Quapropter effigiem Dei, formamque quærere, imbecillitatis humanæ reor. Quisquis est Deus (si modo est alius) et quacunque in parte, totus est sensus, totus est visus, totus auditus, totus animæ, totus animi, totus sui. * * * * * Imperfectæ vero in homine naturæ præcipua solatia ne deum quidem posse omnia. Namque nec sibi potest mortem consciscere, si velit, quod homini dedit optimum in tantis vitæ pœnis: nec mortales æternitate donare, aut revocare defunctos; nec facere ut qui vixit non vixerit, qui honores gessit non gesserit, nullumque habere in præteritum jus, præterquam oblivionis, atque (ut facetis quoque

argumentis societas hæc cum deo copuletur) ut bis dena viginta non sint, et multa similiter efficere non posse.—Per quæ, declaratur haud dubie, naturæ potentiam id quoque esse, quod Deum vocamus. — *Plin. Nat. His. cap. de Deo.*

The consistent Newtonian is necessarily an atheist. See *Sir W. Drummond's Academical Questions*, chap. iii. —Sir W. seems to consider the atheism to which it leads as a sufficient presumption of the falsehood of the system of gravitation: but surely it is more consistent with the good faith of philosophy to admit a deduction from facts, than an hypothesis incapable of proof, although it might militate with the obstinate preconceptions of the mob. Had this author, instead of inveighing against the guilt and absurdity of atheism, demonstrated its falsehood, his conduct would have been more suited to the modesty of the sceptic and the toleration of the philosopher.

Omnia enim per Dei potentiam facta sunt: imo, quia natura potentia nulla est nisi ipsa Dei potentia, artem est nos catemus Dei potentiam non intelligere, quatemus causas naturales ignoramus; adeoque stulte ad eandem Dei potentiam recurritur, quando rei alicujus, causam naturalem, sive est, ipsam Dei potentiam ignoramus.—SPINOSA, *Tract. Theologico-Pol.* chap. i. p. 14.

Page 109.

Ahasuerus, rise!

Ahasuerus the Jew crept forth from the dark cave of Mount Carmel. Near two thousand years have elapsed since he was first goaded by never-ending restlessness to rove the globe from pole to pole. When our Lord was wearied with the burthen of his ponderous cross, and wanted to rest before the door of Ahasuerus, the unfeeling wretch drove him away with brutality. The Saviour of mankind staggered, sinking under the heavy load, but uttered no complaint. An angel of death appeared before Ahasuerus, and exclaimed indignantly, "Barbarian! thou hast denied rest to the Son of Man: be it denied thee also, until he comes to judge the world."

A black demon, let loose from hell upon Ahasuerus, goads him now from country to country; he is denied the consolation which death affords, and precluded from the rest of the peaceful grave.

Ahasuerus crept forth from the dark cave of Mount Carmel—he shook the dust from his beard—and taking up one of the sculls heaped there, hurled it down the eminence: it rebounded from the earth in shivered atoms. This was my father! roared Ahasuerus. Seven more sculls rolled down from rock to rock; while the infuriate Jew, following them with ghastly looks, exclaimed—And these were my wives! He still continued to hurl down scull after scull, roaring in dreadful accents —And these, and these, and these were my children! They *could die*; but, I! reprobate wretch, alas! I cannot die! Dreadful beyond conception is the judgment that hangs over me. Jerusalem fell—I crushed the sucking babe, and precipitated myself into the destructive flames. I cursed the Romans—but, alas! alas! the restless curse held me by the hair,—and I could not die!

Rome the giantess fell—I placed myself before the falling statue—she fell, and did not crush me. Nations

sprung up and disappeared before me;—but I remained and did not die. From cloud-encircled cliffs did I precipitate myself into the ocean; but the foaming billows cast me upon the shore, and the burning arrow of existence pierced my cold heart again. I leaped into Etna's flaming abyss, and roared with the giants for ten long months, polluting with my groans the Mount's sulphureous mouth—ah! ten long months. The volcano fermented, and in a fiery stream of lava cast me up. I lay torn by the torture-snakes of hell amid the glowing cinders, and yet continued to exist. A forest was on fire: I darted on wings of fury and despair into the crackling wood. Fire dropped upon me from the trees, but the flames only singed my limbs: alas! it could not consume them.—I now mixed with the butchers of mankind and plunged in the tempest of the raging battle. I roared defiance to the infuriate Gaul, defiance to the victorious German; but arrows and spears rebounded in shivers from my body. The Saracen's flaming sword broke upon my scull: balls in vain hissed upon me: the lightnings of battle glared harmless around my loins: in vain did the elephant trample on me, in vain the iron hoof of the wrathful steed! The mine, big with destructive power, burst upon me, and hurled me high in the air —I fell on heaps of smoking limbs, but was only singed. The giant's steel club rebounded from my body; the executioner's hand could not strangle me; the tiger's tooth could not pierce me, nor would the hungry lion in the circus devour me. I cohabited with poisonous snakes, and pinched the red crest of the dragon. The serpent stung, but could not destroy me;—the dragon tormented, but dared not to devour me. I now provoked the fury of tyrants: I said to Nero, Thou art a bloodhound! I said to Christiern, Thou art a bloodhound! I said to Muley Ismail, Thou art a bloodhound!—The tyrants invented cruel torments, but did not kill me.

———Ha! not to be able to die—not to be able to die—not to be permitted to rest after the toils of life—to be doomed to be imprisoned for ever in the clay-formed dungeon—to be for ever clogged with this worthless body, its load of diseases and infirmities—to be condemned to hold for millenniums that yawning monster Sameness, and Time, that hungry hyena, ever bearing children, and ever devouring again her offspring!—Ha! not to be permitted to die! Awful avenger in heaven, hast thou in thine armoury of wrath a punishment more dreadful? then let it thunder upon me; command a hurricane to sweep me down to the foot of Carmel, that I there may lie extended; may pant, and writhe, and die!

This fragment is the translation of part of some German work, whose title I have vainly endeavoured to discover. I picked it up, dirty and torn, some years ago, in Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

Page 111.

I will beget a Son, and he shall bear
The sins of all the world.

A book is put into our hands when children, called the Bible, the purport of whose history is briefly this: That God made the earth in six days, and there planted a delightful garden, in which he placed the first pair of human beings. In the midst of the garden he planted a tree, whose fruit, although within their reach, they were forbidden to touch. That the Devil, in the shape of a snake, persuaded them to eat of this fruit; in consequence of which God condemned both them and their posterity yet unborn to satisfy his justice by their eternal misery. That, four thousand years after these events (the human race in the meanwhile having gone unredeemed to perdition), God engendered with the betrothed wife of a carpenter in Judea (whose virginity was nevertheless

uninjured), and begat a Son, whose name was Jesus Christ; and who was crucified and died, in order that no more men might be devoted to hell-fire, he bearing the burthen of his Father's displeasure by proxy. The book states, in addition, that the soul of whoever disbelieves this sacrifice will be burned with everlasting fire.

During many ages of misery and darkness, this story gained implicit belief; but at length men arose who suspected that it was a fable and imposture, and that Jesus Christ, so far from being a God, was only a man like themselves. But a numerous set of men, who derived and still derive immense emoluments from this opinion, in the shape of a popular belief, told the vulgar, that, if they did not believe in the Bible, they would be damned to all eternity; and burned, imprisoned, and poisoned all the unbiassed and unconnected enquirers who occasionally arose. They still oppress them, so far as the people, now become more enlightened, will allow.

The belief in all that the Bible contains is called Christianity. A Roman governor of Judea, at the instances of a priest-led mob, crucified a man called Jesus eighteen centuries ago. He was a man of pure life, who desired to rescue his countrymen from the tyranny of their barbarous and degrading superstitions. The common fate of all who desire to benefit mankind awaited him. The rabble, at the instigation of the priests, demanded his death, although his very judge made public acknowledgment of his innocence. Jesus was sacrificed to the honour of that God with whom he was afterwards confounded. It is of importance, therefore, to distinguish between the pretended character of this being as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, and his real character as a man, who, for a vain attempt to reform the world, paid the forfeit of his life to that overbearing tyranny which has since so long desolated the universe in his name. Whilst the one is a hypocritical

demon, who announces himself as the God of compassion and peace, even whilst he stretches forth his blood-red hand with the sword of discord to waste the earth, having confessedly devised this scheme of desolation from eternity; the other stands in the foremost list of those true heroes, who have died in the glorious martyrdom of liberty, and have braved torture, contempt, and poverty, in the cause of suffering humanity.*

The vulgar, ever in extremes, became persuaded that the crucifixion of Jesus was a supernatural event. Testimonies of miracles, so frequent in unenlightened ages, were not wanting to prove that he was something divine. This belief, rolling through the lapse of ages, met with the reveries of Plato and the reasonings of Aristotle, and acquired force and extent, until the divinity of Jesus became a dogma, which to dispute was death, which to doubt was infamy.

Christianity is now the established religion: he who attempts to impugn it, must be contented to behold murderers and traitors take precedence of him in public opinion; though, if his genius be equal to his courage, and assisted by a peculiar coalition of circumstances, future ages may exalt him to a divinity, and persecute others in his name, as he was persecuted in the name of his predecessor in the homage of the world.

The same means that have supported every other popular belief, have supported Christianity. War, imprisonment, assassination, and falsehood; deeds of unexampled and incomparable atrocity have made it what it is. The blood shed by the votaries of the God of mercy and peace, since the establishment of his religion, would probably suffice to drown all other sectaries now on the habitable globe. We derive from our ancestors a faith thus fostered and supported: we quarrel, persecute, and

* Since writing this note I have seen reason to suspect that Jesus was an ambitious man, who aspired to the throne of Judea.

hate for its maintenance. Even under a government which, whilst it infringes the very right of thought and speech, boasts of permitting the liberty of the press, a man is pilloried and imprisoned because he is a deist, and no one raises his voice in the indignation of outraged humanity. But it is ever a proof that the falsehood of a proposition is felt by those who use coercion, not reasoning, to procure its admission; and a dispassionate observer would feel himself more powerfully interested in favour of a man, who, depending on the truth of his opinions, simply stated his reasons for entertaining them, than in that of his aggressor, who, daringly avowing his unwillingness or incapacity to answer them by argument, proceeded to repress the energies and break the spirit of their promulgator by that torture and imprisonment whose infliction he could command.

Analogy seems to favour the opinion that, as, like other systems, Christianity has arisen and augmented, so like them it will decay and perish; that, as violence, darkness, and deceit, not reasoning and persuasion, have procured its admission among mankind, so, when enthusiasm has subsided, and time, that infallible controverter of false opinions, has involved its pretended evidences in the darkness of antiquity, it will become obsolete; that Milton's poem alone will give permanency to the remembrance of its absurdities; and that men will laugh as heartily at grace, faith, redemption, and original sin, as they now do at the metamorphoses of Jupiter, the miracles of Romish saints, the efficacy of witchcraft, and the appearance of departed spirits.

Had the Christian religion commenced and continued by the mere force of reasoning and persuasion, the preceding analogy would be inadmissible. We should never speculate on the future obsoleteness of a system perfectly conformable to nature and reason: it would endure so long as they endured; it would be a truth as indisputable

as the light of the sun, the criminality of murder, and other facts, whose evidence, depending on our organization and relative situations, must remain acknowledged as satisfactory, so long as man is man. It is an incontrovertible fact, the consideration of which ought to repress the hasty conclusions of credulity, or moderate its obstinacy in maintaining them, that, had the Jews not been a fanatical race of men, had even the resolution of Pontius Pilate been equal to his candour, the Christian religion never could have prevailed, it could not even have existed: on so feeble a thread hangs the most cherished opinion of a sixth of the human race! When will the vulgar learn humility? When will the pride of ignorance blush at having believed before it could comprehend?

Either the Christian religion is true, or it is false: if true, it comes from God, and its authenticity can admit of doubt and dispute no further than its omnipotent author is willing to allow. Either the power or the goodness of God is called in question, if he leaves those doctrines most essential to the well-being of man in doubt and dispute; the only ones which, since their promulgation, have been the subject of unceasing cavil, the cause of irreconcilable hatred. *If God has spoken, why is the universe not convinced?*

There is this passage in the Christian Scriptures: "Those who obey not God, and believe not the Gospel of his Son, shall be punished with everlasting destruction." This is the pivot upon which all religions turn: they all assume that it is in our power to believe or not to believe; whereas the mind can only believe that which it thinks true. A human being can only be supposed accountable for those actions which are influenced by his will. But belief is utterly distinct from and unconnected with volition: it is the apprehension of the agreement or disagreement of the ideas that compose any proposition. Belief is a passion, or involuntary operation of the

mind, and, like other passions, its intensity is precisely proportionate to the degrees of excitement. Volition is essential to merit or demerit. But the Christian religion attaches the highest possible degrees of merit and demerit to that which is worthy of neither, and which is totally unconnected with the peculiar faculty of the mind, whose presence is essential to their being.

Christianity was intended to reform the world: had an all-wise Being planned it, nothing is more improbable than that it should have failed: omniscience would infallibly have foreseen the inutility of a scheme which experience demonstrates, to this age, to have been utterly unsuccessful.

Christianity inculcates the necessity of supplicating the Deity. Prayer may be considered under two points of view;—as an endeavour to change the intentions of God, or as a formal testimony of our obedience. But the former case supposes that the caprices of a limited intelligence can occasionally instruct the Creator of the world how to regulate the universe; and the latter, a certain degree of servility analogous to the loyalty demanded by earthly tyrants. Obedience indeed is only the pitiful and cowardly egotism of him who thinks that he can do something better than reason.

Christianity, like all other religions, rests upon miracles, prophecies, and martyrdoms. No religion ever existed, which had not its prophets, its attested miracles, and, above all, crowds of devotees who would bear patiently the most horrible tortures to prove its authenticity. It should appear that in no case can a discriminating mind subscribe to the genuineness of a miracle. A miracle is an infraction of nature's law, by a supernatural cause; by a cause acting beyond that eternal circle within which all things are included. God breaks through the law of nature, that he may convince mankind of the truth of that revelation which, in spite of his precautions, has

been, since its introduction, the subject of unceasing schism and cavil.

Miracles resolve themselves into the following question:*—Whether it is more probable the laws of nature, hitherto so immutably harmonious, should have undergone violation, or that a man should have told a lie? Whether it is more probable that we are ignorant of the natural cause of an event, or that we know the supernatural one? That, in old times, when the powers of nature were less known than at present, a certain set of men were themselves deceived, or had some hidden motive for deceiving others; or that God begat a son, who, in his legislation, measuring merit by belief, evidenced himself to be totally ignorant of the powers of the human mind—of what is voluntary, and what is the contrary?

We have many instances of men telling lies;—none of an infraction of nature's laws, those laws of whose government alone we have any knowledge or experience. The records of all nations afford innumerable instances of men deceiving others either from vanity or interest, or themselves being deceived by the limitedness of their views and their ignorance of natural causes: but where is the accredited case of God having come upon earth, to give the lie to his own creations? There would be something truly wonderful in the appearance of a ghost; but the assertion of a child that he saw one as he passed through the churchyard, is universally admitted to be less miraculous.

But even supposing that a man should raise a dead body to life before our eyes, and on this fact rest his claim to being considered the son of God;—the Humane Society restores drowned persons, and because it makes no mystery of the method it employs, its members are not mistaken for the sons of God. All that we have a right to infer from our ignorance of the cause of any event is that

* See Hume's Essay, vol. ii. page 121.

we do not know it: had the Mexicans attended to this simple rule when they heard the cannon of the Spaniards, they would not have considered them as gods: the experiments of modern chemistry would have defied the wisest philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome to have accounted for them on natural principles. An author of strong common sense has observed, that "a miracle is no miracle at second-hand;" he might have added, that a miracle is no miracle in any case; for until we are acquainted with all natural causes, we have no reason to imagine others.

There remains to be considered another proof of Christianity—Prophecy. A book is written before a certain event, in which this event is foretold; how could the prophet have foreknown it without inspiration; how could he have been inspired without God? The greatest stress is laid on the prophecies of Moses and Hosea on the dispersion of the Jews, and that of Isaiah concerning the coming of the Messiah. The prophecy of Moses is a collection of every possible cursing and blessing; and it is so far from being marvellous that the one of dispersion should have been fulfilled, that it would have been more surprising if, out of all these, none should have taken effect. In Deuteronomy, chap. xxviii. ver. 64, where Moses explicitly foretells the dispersion, he states that they shall there serve gods of wood and stone: "And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even to the other, *and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even gods of wood and stone.*" The Jews are at this day remarkably tenacious of their religion. Moses also declares that they shall be subjected to these causes for disobedience to his ritual: "And it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all the commandments and statutes which I command you this day, that all these

curses shall come upon thee and overtake thee." Is this the real reason? The third, fourth, and fifth chapters of Hosea are a piece of immodest confession. The indelicate type might apply in a hundred senses to a hundred things. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is more explicit, yet it does not exceed in clearness the oracles of Delphos. The historical proof, that Moses, Isaiah, and Hosea did write when they are said to have written, is far from being clear and circumstantial.

But prophecy requires proof in its character as a miracle; we have no right to suppose that a man foreknew future events from God, until it is demonstrated that he neither could know them by his own exertions, nor that the writings which contain the prediction could possibly have been fabricated after the event pretended to be foretold. It is more probable that writings, pretending to divine inspiration, should have been fabricated after the fulfilment of their pretended prediction, than that they should have really been divinely inspired; when we consider that the latter supposition makes God at once the creator of the human mind and ignorant of its primary powers, particularly as we have numberless instances of false religions, and forged prophecies of things long past, and no accredited case of God having conversed with men directly or indirectly. It is also possible that the description of an event might have foregone its occurrence; but this is far from being a legitimate proof of a divine revelation, as many men, not pretending to the character of a prophet, have nevertheless, in this sense, prophesied.

Lord Chesterfield was never yet taken for a prophet, even by a bishop, yet he uttered this remarkable prediction: "The despotic government of France is screwed up to the highest pitch; a revolution is fast approaching; that revolution, I am convinced, will be radical and sanguinary." This appeared in the letters of the prophet

long before the accomplishment of this wonderful prediction. Now, have these particulars come to pass, or have they not? If they have, how could the Earl have foreknown them without inspiration? If we admit the truth of the Christian religion on testimony such as this, we must admit, on the same strength of evidence, that God has affixed the highest rewards to belief, and the eternal tortures of the never-dying worm to disbelief; both of which have been demonstrated to be involuntary.

The last proof of the Christian religion depends on the influence of the Holy Ghost. Theologians divide the influence of the Holy Ghost into its ordinary and extraordinary modes of operation. The latter is supposed to be that which inspired the Prophets and Apostles; and the former to be the grace of God, which summarily makes known the truth of his revelation to those whose mind is fitted for its reception by a submissive perusal of his word. Persons convinced in this manner, can do anything but account for their conviction, describe the time at which it happened, or the manner in which it came upon them. It is supposed to enter the mind by other channels than those of the senses, and therefore professes to be superior to reason founded on their experience.

Admitting, however, the usefulness or possibility of a divine revelation, unless we demolish the foundations of all human knowledge, it is requisite that our reason should previously demonstrate its genuineness; for, before we extinguish the steady ray of reason and common sense, it is fit that we should discover whether we cannot do without their assistance, whether or no there be any other which may suffice to guide us through the labyrinth of life:* for, if a man is to be inspired upon all occasions, if he is to be sure of a thing because he is sure, if the ordinary operations of the spirit are not to be considered

* See Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding, book iv. chap. xix., on Enthusiasm.

very extraordinary modes of demonstration, if enthusiasm is to usurp the place of proof, and madness that of sanity, all reasoning is superfluous. The Mahometan dies fighting for his Prophet, the Indian immolates himself at the chariot-wheels of Brahma, the Hottentot worships an insect, the Negro a bunch of feathers, the Mexican sacrifices human victims! Their degree of conviction must certainly be very strong: it cannot arise from conviction, it must from feelings, the reward of their prayers. If each of these should affirm, in opposition to the strongest possible arguments, that inspiration carried internal evidence, I fear their inspired brethren, the orthodox Missionaries, would be so uncharitable as to pronounce them obstinate.

Miracles cannot be received as testimonies of a disputed fact, because all human testimony has ever been insufficient to establish the possibility of miracles. That which is incapable of proof itself, is no proof of anything else. Prophecy has also been rejected by the test of reason. Those, then, who have been actually inspired, are the only true believers in the Christian religion.

> Mox numine viso
> Virginei tumuere sinus, innuptaque mater
> Arcano stupuit compleri viscera partu,
> Auctorem paritura suum. Mortalia corda
> Artificem texere poli, latuitque sub uno
> Pectore, qui totum late complectitur orbem.
>
> CLAUDIAN, *Carmen Paschale.*

Does not so monstrous and disgusting an absurdity carry its own infamy and refutation with itself?

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Him, (still from hope to hope the bliss pursuing,
Which, from the exhaustless lore of human weal
Draws on the virtuous mind,) the thoughts that rise
In time-destroying infiniteness, gift
With self-enshrined eternity, &c.

Time is our consciousness of the succession of ideas in our mind. Vivid sensation, of either pain or pleasure, makes the time seem long, as the common phrase is, because it renders us more acutely conscious of our ideas. If a mind be conscious of an hundred ideas during one minute, by the clock, and of two hundred during another, the latter of these spaces would actually occupy so much greater extent in the mind as two exceed one in quantity. If, therefore, the human mind, by any future improvement of its sensibility, should become conscious of an infinite number of ideas in a minute, that minute would be eternity. I do not hence infer that the actual space between the birth and death of a man will ever be prolonged; but that his sensibility is perfectible, and that the number of ideas which his mind is capable of receiving is indefinite. One man is stretched on the rack during twelve hours; another sleeps soundly in his bed: the difference of time perceived by these two persons is immense; one hardly will believe that half an hour has elapsed, the other could credit that centuries had flown during his agony. Thus, the life of a man of virtue and talent, who should die in his thirtieth year, is, with regard to his own feelings, longer than that of a miserable priest-ridden slave, who dreams out a century of dulness. The one has perpetually cultivated his mental faculties, has rendered himself master of his thoughts, can abstract and generalize amid the lethargy of everyday business;—the other can slumber over the brightest moments of his being, and is unable to remember the

happiest hour of his life. Perhaps the perishing ephemeron enjoys a longer life than the tortoise.

Dark flood of time!
Roll as it listeth thee—I measure not
By months or moments thy ambiguous course.
Another may stand by me on the brink
And watch the bubble whirl'd beyond his ken
That pauses at my feet. The sense of love,
The thirst for action, and the impassion'd thought
Prolong my being: if I wake no more,
My life more actual living will contain
Than some grey veterans' of the world's cold school,
Whose listless hours unprofitably roll,
By one enthusiast feeling unredeem'd.

See Godwin's Pol. Jus. vol. i. *page* 411;—*and Condorcet, Esquisse d'un Tableau Historique des Progrès de l'Esprit Humain, Epoque* ix.

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No longer now
He slays the lamb that looks him in the face.

I hold that the depravity of the physical and moral nature of man originated in his unnatural habits of life. The origin of man, like that of the universe of which he is a part, is enveloped in impenetrable mystery. His generations either had a beginning, or they had not. The weight of evidence in favour of each of these suppositions seems tolerably equal; and it is perfectly unimportant to the present argument which is assumed. The language spoken, however, by the mythology of nearly all religions seems to prove, that at some distant period man forsook the path of nature, and sacrified the purity and happiness of his being to unnatural appetites. The date of this event seems to have also been that of some great change in the climates of the earth, with which it has an obvious correspondence. The allegory of Adam and Eve eating

of the tree of evil, and entailing upon their posterity the wrath of God and the loss of everlasting life, admits of no other explanation than the disease and crime that have flowed from unnatural diet. Milton was so well aware of this, that he makes Raphael thus exhibit to Adam the consequence of his disobedience:—

> Immediately a place
> Before his eyes appear'd: sad, noisome, dark:
> A lazar-house it seem'd; wherein were laid
> Numbers of all diseased: all maladies
> Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
> Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,
> Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
> Intestine stone and ulcer, cholic pangs,
> Dæmoniac frenzy, moping melancholy,
> And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
> Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,
> Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.

And how many thousands more might not be added to this frightful catalogue!

The story of Prometheus is one likewise which, although universally admitted to be allegorical, has never been satisfactorily explained. Prometheus stole fire from heaven, and was chained for this crime to mount Caucasus, where a vulture continually devoured his liver, that grew to meet its hunger. Hesiod says, that before the time of Prometheus, mankind were exempt from suffering; that they enjoyed a vigorous youth, and that death, when at length it came, approached like sleep, and gently closed their eyes. Again, so general was this opinion, that Horace, a poet of the Augustan age, writes—

> Audax omnia perpeti,
> Gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas;
> Audax Iapeti genus
> Ignem fraude mala gentibus intulit:

Post ignem ætheriâ domo
Subductum, macies et nova febrium
Terris incubuit cohors,
Semotique prius tarda necessitas
Lethi corripuit gradum.

How plain a language is spoken by all this. Prometheus (who represents the human race) effected some great change in the condition of his nature, and applied fire to culinary purposes; thus inventing an expedient for screening from his disgust the horrors of the shambles. From this moment his vitals were devoured by the vulture of disease. It consumed his being in every shape of its loathsome and infinite variety, inducing the soul-quelling sinkings of premature and violent death. All vice arose from the ruin of healthful innocence. Tyranny, superstition, commerce, and inequality, were then first known, when reason vainly attempted to guide the wanderings of exacerbated passion. I conclude this part of the subject with an extract from Mr. Newton's Defence of Vegetable Regimen, from whom I have borrowed this interpretation of the fable of Prometheus.

"Making allowance for such transposition of the events of the allegory as time might produce after the important truths were forgotten, which this portion of the ancient mythology was intended to transmit, the drift of the fable seems to be this:—Man at his creation was endowed with the gift of perpetual youth; that is, he was not formed to be a sickly suffering creature as we now see him, but to enjoy health, and to sink by slow degrees into the bosom of his parent earth without disease or pain. Prometheus first taught the use of animal food (primus bovem occidit Prometheus *) and of fire, with which to render it more digestible and pleasing to the taste. Jupiter, and the rest of the gods, foreseeing the conse-

* Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vii. sect. 57.

quences of these inventions, were amused or irritated at the short-sighted devices of the newly-formed creature, and left him to experience the sad effects of them. Thirst, the necessary concomitant of a flesh diet" (perhaps of all diet vitiated by culinary preparation), "ensued; water was resorted to, and man forfeited the inestimable gift of health which he had received from heaven: he became diseased, the partaker of a precarious existence, and no longer descended slowly to his grave."*

> But just disease to luxury succeeds,
> And every death its own avenger breeds;
> The fury passions from that blood began,
> And turn'd on man a fiercer savage—man.

Man, and the animals whom he has infected with his society, or depraved by his dominion, are alone diseased. The wild hog, the mouflon, the bison, and the wolf, are perfectly exempt from malady, and invariably die either from external violence, or natural old age. But the domestic hog, the sheep, the cow, and the dog, are subject to an incredible variety of distempers; and, like the corrupters of their nature, have physicians who thrive upon their miseries. The supereminence of man is like Satan's, a supereminence of pain; and the majority of his species, doomed to penury, disease, and crime, have reason to curse the untoward event that, by enabling him to communicate his sensations, raised him above the level of his fellow animals. But the steps that have been taken are irrevocable. The whole of human science is comprised in one question:—How can the advantages of intellect and civilization be reconciled with the liberty and pure pleasures of natural life? How can we take the benefits, and reject the evils of the system, which is now interwoven with all the fibres of our being?—I believe that abstinence from animal food and spirituous liquors

* Return to Nature. Cadell, 1811.

would in a great measure capacitate us for the solution of this important question.

It is true, that mental and bodily derangement is attributable in part to other deviations from rectitude and nature than those which concern diet. The mistakes cherished by society respecting the connexion of the sexes, whence the misery and diseases of unsatisfied celibacy, unenjoying prostitution, and the premature arrival of puberty, necessarily spring; the putrid atmosphere of crowded cities; the exhalations of chemical processes; the muffling of our bodies in superfluous apparel; the absurd treatment of infants:—all these, and innumerable other causes, contribute their mite to the mass of human evil.

Comparative anatomy teaches us that man resembles frugivorous animals in everything, and carnivorous in nothing; he has neither claws wherewith to seize his prey, nor distinct and pointed teeth to tear the living fibre. A Mandarin of the first class, with nails two inches long, would probably find them alone inefficient to hold even a hare. After every subterfuge of gluttony, the bull must be degraded into the ox, and the ram into the wether, by an unnatural and inhuman operation, that the flaccid fibre may offer a fainter resistance to rebellious nature. It is only by softening and disguising dead flesh by culinary preparation, that it is rendered susceptible of mastication or digestion; and that the sight of its bloody juices and raw horror does not excite intolerable loathing and disgust. Let the advocate of animal food force himself to a decisive experiment on its fitness, and, as Plutarch recommends, tear a living lamb with his teeth, and, plunging his head into its vitals, slake his thirst with the steaming blood; when fresh from the deed of horror, let him revert to the irresistible instincts of nature that would rise in judgment against it, and say,

Nature formed me for such work as this. Then, and then only, would he be consistent.

Man resembles no carnivorous animal. There is no exception, unless man be one, to the rule of herbivorous animals having cellulated colons.

The orang-outang perfectly resembles man both in the order and number of his teeth. The orang-outang is the most anthropomorphous of the ape tribe, all of which are strictly frugivorous. There is no other species of animals, which live on different food, in which this analogy exists.* In many frugivorous animals, the canine teeth are more pointed and distinct than those of man. The resemblance also of the human stomach to that of the orang-outang, is greater than to that of any other animal.

The intestines are also identical with those of herbivorous animals, which present a larger surface for absorption, and have ample and cellulated colons. The cœcum also, though short, is larger than that of carnivorous animals; and even here the orang-outang retains it accustomed similarity.

The structure of the human frame then is that of one fitted to a pure vegetable diet, in every essential particular. It is true, that the reluctance to abstain from animal food, in those who have been long accustomed to its stimulus, is so great in some persons of weak minds, as to be scarcely overcome; but this is far from bringing any argument in its favour. A lamb, which was fed for some time on flesh by a ship's crew, refused its natural diet at the end of the voyage. There are numerous instances of horses, sheep, oxen, and even wood-pigeons, having been taught to live upon flesh, until they have loathed their natural aliment. Young children evidently prefer pastry, oranges, apples, and other fruit, to the flesh

* Cuvier, Lecons d'Anat. Comp. tom. iii. pages 169, 373, 448, 465, 480. Rees's Cyclopædia, article Man.

of animals; until, by the gradual depravation of the digestive organs, the free use of vegetables has for a time produced serious inconveniences; *for a time*, I say, since there never was an instance wherein a change from spirituous liquors and animal food to vegetables and pure water, has failed ultimately to invigorate the body, by rendering its juices bland and consentaneous, and to restore to the mind that cheerfulness and elasticity, which not one in fifty possesses on the present system. A love of strong liquors is also with difficulty taught to infants. Almost every one remembers the wry faces which the first glass of port produced. Unsophisticated instinct is invariably unerring; but to decide on the fitness of animal food, from the perverted appetites which its constrained adoption produces, is to make the criminal a judge in his own cause: it is even worse, it is appealing to the infatuated drunkard in a question of the salubrity of brandy.

What is the cause of morbid action in the animal system? Not the air we breathe, for our fellow denizens of nature breathe the same uninjured; not the water we drink (if remote from the pollutions of man and his inventions*), for the animals drink it too; not the earth we tread upon; not the unobscured sight of glorious nature, in the wood, the field, or the expanse of sky and ocean; nothing that we are or do in common with the undiseased inhabitants of the forest. Something then wherein we differ from them: our habit of altering our food by fire, so that our appetite is no longer a just criterion for the fitness of its gratification. Except in children, there remain no traces of that instinct which determines, in all

* The necessity of resorting to some means of purifying water, and the disease which arises from its adulteration in civilized countries, is sufficiently apparent.—See Dr. Lambe's Reports on Cancer. I do not assert that the use of water is in itself unnatural, but that the unperverted palate would swallow no liquid capable of occasioning disease.

other animals, what aliment is natural or otherwise; and so perfectly obliterated are they in the reasoning adults of our species, that it has become necessary to urge considerations drawn from comparative anatomy, to prove that we are naturally frugivorous.

Crime is madness. Madness is disease. Whenever the cause of disease shall be discovered, the root, from which all vice and misery have so long overshadowed the globe, will lie bare to the axe. All the exertions of man, from that moment, may be considered as tending to the clear profit of his species. No sane mind in a sane body resolves upon a real crime. It is a man of violent passions, blood-shot eyes, and swollen veins, that alone can grasp the knife of murder. The system of a simple diet promises no Utopian advantages. It is no mere reform of legislation, whilst the furious passions and evil propensities of the human heart, in which it had its origin, are still unassuaged. It strikes at the root of all evil, and is an experiment which may be tried with success, not alone by nations, but by small societies, families, and even individuals. In no cases has a return to vegetable diet produced the slightest injury; in most it has been attended with changes undeniably beneficial. Should ever a physician be born with the genius of Locke, I am persuaded that he might trace all bodily and mental derangements to our unnatural habits, as clearly as that philosopher has traced all knowledge to sensation. What prolific sources of disease are not those mineral and vegetable poisons that have been introduced for its extirpation! How many thousands have become murderers and robbers, bigots and domestic tyrants, dissolute and abandoned adventurers, from the use of fermented liquors; who, had they slaked their thirst only with pure water, would have lived but to diffuse the happiness of their own unperverted feelings? How many groundless opinions and absurd institutions have not received a general

sanction from the sottishness and intemperance of individuals! Who will assert that, had the populace of Paris satisfied their hunger at the ever-furnished table of vegetable nature, they would have lent their brutal suffrage to the proscription-list of Robespierre? Could a set of men, whose passions were not perverted by unnatural stimuli, look with coolness on an *auto da fè?* Is it to be believed that a being of gentle feelings, rising from his meal of roots, would take delight in sports of blood? Was Nero a man of temperate life? Could you read calm health in his cheeks, flushed with ungovernable propensities of hatred for the human race? Did Muley Ismael's pulse beat evenly, was his skin transparent, did his eyes beam with healthfulness, and its invariable concomitants, cheerfulness and benignity? Though history has decided none of these questions, a child could not hesitate to answer in the negative. Surely the bile-suffused cheek of Buonaparte, his wrinkled brow, and yellow eye, the ceaseless inquietude of his nervous system, speak no less plainly the character of his unresting ambition than his murders and his victories. It is impossible, had Buonaparte descended from a race of vegetable feeders, that he could have had either the inclination or the power to ascend the throne of the Bourbons. The desire of tyranny could scarcely be excited in the individual, the power to tyrannize would certainly not be delegated by a society neither frenzied by inebriation, nor rendered impotent and irrational by disease. Pregnant indeed with inexhaustible calamity is the renunciation of instinct, as it concerns our physical nature; arithmetic cannot enumerate, nor reason perhaps suspect, the multitudinous sources of disease in civilized life. Even common water, that apparently innoxious *pabulum*, when corrupted by the filth of populous cities, is a deadly and insidious destroyer.* Who can wonder

* Lambe's Reports on Cancer.

that all the inducements held out by God himself in the Bible to virtue should have been vainer than a nurse's tale; and that those dogmas, by which he has there excited and justified the most ferocious propensities, should have alone been deemed essential; whilst Christians are in the daily practice of all those habits which have infected with disease and crime, not only the reprobate sons, but these favoured children of the common Father's love. Omnipotence itself could not save them from the consequences of this original and universal sin.

There is no disease, bodily or mental, which adoption of vegetable diet and pure water has not infallibly mitigated, wherever the experiment has been fairly tried. Debility is gradually converted into strength, disease into healthfulness; madness, in all its hideous variety, from the ravings of the fettered maniac, to the unaccountable irrationalities of ill temper, that make a hell of domestic life, into a calm and considerate evenness of temper, that alone might offer a certain pledge of the future moral reformation of society. On a natural system of diet, old age would be our last and our only malady; the term of our existence would be protracted; we should enjoy life, and no longer preclude others from the enjoyment of it; all sensational delights would be infinitely more exquisite and perfect; the very sense of being would then be a continued pleasure, such as we now feel it in some few and favoured moments of our youth. By all that is sacred in our hopes for the human race, I conjure those who love happiness and truth, to give a fair trial to the vegetable system. Reasoning is surely superfluous on a subject whose merits an experience of six months would set for ever at rest. But it is only among the enlightened and benevolent that so great a sacrifice of appetite and prejudice can be expected, even though its ultimate excellence should not admit of dispute. It is found easier, by the short-sighted victims of disease, to palliate their

torments by medicine, than to prevent them by regimen. The vulgar of all ranks are invariably sensual and indocile; yet I cannot but feel myself persuaded, that when the benefits of vegetable diet are mathematically proved; when it is as clear, that those who live naturally are exempt from premature death, as that nine is not one, the most sottish of mankind will feel a preference towards a long and tranquil, contrasted with a short and painful life. On the average, out of sixty persons, four die in three years. Hopes are entertained that in April, 1814, a statement will be given that sixty persons, all having lived more than three years on vegetables and pure water, are then *in perfect health.* More than two years have now elapsed; *not one of them has died;* no such example will be found in any sixty persons taken at random. Seventeen persons of all ages (the families of Dr. Lambe and Mr. Newton) have lived for seven years on this diet without a death, and almost without the slightest illness. Surely, when we consider that some of these were infants, and one a martyr to asthma now nearly subdued, we may challenge any seventeen persons taken at random in this city to exhibit a parallel case. Those who may have been excited to question the rectitude of established habits of diet, by these loose remarks, should consult Mr. Newton's luminous and eloquent essay.*

When these proofs come fairly before the world, and are clearly seen by all who understand arithmetic, it is scarcely possible that abstinence from aliments demonstrably pernicious should not become universal. In proportion to the number of proselytes, so will be the weight of evidence; and when a thousand persons can be produced, living on vegetables and distilled water, who have to dread no disease but old age, the world will be compelled to regard animal flesh and fermented liquors as

* Return to Nature, or Defence of Vegetable Regimen. Cadell, 1811.

slow but certain poisons. The change which would be produced by simpler habits on political economy, is sufficiently remarkable. The monopolizing eater of animal flesh would no longer destroy his constitution by devouring an acre at a meal, and many loaves of bread would cease to contribute to gout, madness, and apoplexy, in the shape of a pint of porter, or a dram of gin, when appeasing the long-protracted famine of the hard-working peasant's hungry babes. The quantity of nutritious vegetable matter, consumed in fattening the carcase of an ox, would afford ten times the sustenance, undepraving indeed, and incapable of generating disease, if gathered immediately from the bosom of the earth. The most fertile districts of the habitable globe are now actually cultivated by men for animals, at a delay and waste of aliment absolutely incapable of calculation. It is only the wealthy that can, to any great degree, even now, indulge the unnatural craving for dead flesh, and they pay for the greater licence of the privilege, by subjection to supernumerary diseases. Again, the spirit of the nation that should take the lead in this great reform, would insensibly become agricultural; commerce, with all its vices, selfishness, and corruption, would gradually decline; more natural habits would produce gentler manners, and the excessive complication of political relations would be so far simplified, that every individual might feel and understand why he loved his country, and took a personal interest in its welfare. How would England, for example, depend on the caprices of foreign rulers, if she contained within herself all the necessaries, and despised whatever they possessed of the luxuries of life? How could they starve her into compliance with their views? Of what consequence would it be that they refused to take her woollen manufactures, when large and fertile tracts of the island ceased to be allotted to the waste of pasturage? On a natural system of diet, we

should require no spices from India; no wines from Portugal, Spain, France, or Madeira; none of those multitudinous articles of luxury, for which every corner of the globe is rifled, and which are the causes of so much individual rivalship, such calamitous and sanguinary national disputes. In the history of modern times, the avarice of commercial monopoly, no less than the ambition of weak and wicked chiefs, seems to have fomented the universal discord, to have added stubbornness to the mistakes of cabinets, and indocility to the infatuation of the people. Let it ever be remembered, that it is the direct influence of commerce to make the interval between the richest and the poorest man, wider and more unconquerable. Let it be remembered, that it is a foe to everything of real worth and excellence in the human character. The odious and disgusting aristocracy of wealth is built upon the ruins of all that is good in chivalry or republicanism; and luxury is the forerunner of a barbarism scarce capable of cure. Is it impossible to realize a state of society where all the energies of man shall be directed to the production of his solid happiness? Certainly, if this advantage (the object of all political speculation) be in any degree attainable, it is attainable only by a community which holds out no factitious incentives to the avarice and ambition of the few, and which is internally organized for the liberty, security and comfort of the many. None must be entrusted with power (and money is the completest species of power) who do not stand pledged to use it exclusively for the general benefit. But the use of animal flesh and fermented liquors directly militates with this equality of the rights of man. The peasant cannot gratify these fashionable cravings without leaving his family to starve. Without disease and war, those sweeping curtailers of population, pasturage would include a waste too great to be afforded. The labour requisite to

support a family is far lighter* than is usually supposed. The peasantry work, not only for themselves, but for the aristocracy, the army, and the manufacturers.

The advantage of a reform in diet is obviously greater than that of any other. It strikes at the root of the evil. To remedy the abuses of legislation, before we annihilate the propensities by which they are produced, is to suppose that by taking away the effect, the cause will cease to operate. But the efficacy of this system depends entirely on the proselytism of individuals, and grounds its merits, as a benefit to the community, upon the total change of the dietetic habits in its members. It proceeds securely from a number of particular cases to one that is universal, and has this advantage over the contrary mode, that one error does not invalidate all that has gone before.

Let not too much, however, be expected from this system. The healthiest among us is not exempt from hereditary disease. The most symmetrical, athletic, and long-lived, is a being inexpressibly inferior to what he would have been, had not the unnatural habits of his ancestors accumulated for him a certain portion of malady and deformity. In the most perfect specimen of civilized man, something is still found wanting by the physiological critic. Can a return to nature, then, instantaneously eradicate predispositions that have been slowly taking root in the silence of innumerable ages?—Indubitably not. All that I contend for is, that from the

* It has come under the author's experience, that some of the workmen on an embankment in North Wales, who, in consequence of the inability of the proprietor to pay them, seldom received their wages, have supported large families by cultivating small spots of sterile ground by moonlight. In the notes to Pratt's Poem, "Bread, or the Poor," is an account of an industrious labourer, who, by working in a small garden, before and after his day's task, attained to an enviable state of independence.

moment of the relinquishing all unnatural habits, no new disease is generated; and that the predisposition to hereditary maladies gradually perishes, for want of its accustomed supply. In cases of consumption, cancer, gout, asthma, and scrofula, such is the invariable tendency of a diet of vegetables and pure water.

Those who may be induced by these remarks to give the vegetable system a fair trial, should, in the first place, date the commencement of their practice from the moment of their conviction. All depends upon breaking through a pernicious habit resolutely, and at once. Dr. Trotter* asserts, that no drunkard was ever reformed by gradually relinquishing his dram. Animal flesh, in its effects on the human stomach, is analogous to a dram. It is similar in the kind, though differing in the degree, of its operation. The proselyte to a pure diet must be warned to expect a temporary diminution of muscular strength. The subtraction of a powerful stimulus will suffice to account for this event. But it is only temporary, and is succeeded by an equable capability for exertion, far surpassing his former various and fluctuating strength. Above all, he will acquire an easiness of breathing, by which such exertion is performed, with a remarkable exemption from that painful and difficult panting now felt by almost every one, after hastily climbing an ordinary mountain. He will be equally capable of bodily exertion, or mental application, after as before his simple meal. He will feel none of the narcotic effects of ordinary diet. Irritability, the direct consequence of exhausting stimuli, would yield to the power of natural and tranquil impulses. He will no longer pine under the lethargy of *ennui*, that unconquerable weariness of life, more to be dreaded than death itself. He will escape the epidemic madness, which broods over its own injurious notions of the Deity, and

* See Trotter on the Nervous Temperament.

"realizes the hell that priests and beldams feign." Every man forms as it were his god from his own character; to the divinity of one of simple habits, no offering would be more acceptable than the happiness of his creatures. He would be incapable of hating or persecuting others for the love of God. He will find, moreover, a system of simple diet to be a system of perfect epicurism. He will no longer be incessantly occupied in blunting and destroying those organs from which he expects his gratification. The pleasures of taste to be derived from a dinner of potatoes, beans, peas, turnips, lettuces, with a dessert of apples, gooseberries, strawberries, currants, raspberries, and, in winter, oranges, apples, and pears, is far greater than is supposed. Those who wait until they can eat this plain fare with the sauce of appetite will scarcely join with the hypocritical sensualist at a lord-mayor's feast, who declaims against the pleasures of the table. Solomon kept a thousand concubines, and owned in despair that all was vanity. The man whose happiness is constituted by the society of one amiable woman, would find some difficulty in sympathizing with the disappointment of this venerable debauchee.

I address myself not only to the young enthusiast, the ardent devotee of truth and virtue, the pure and passionate moralist, yet unvitiated by the contagion of the world. He will embrace a pure system, from its abstract truth, its beauty, its simplicity, and its promise of wide-extended benefit; unless custom has turned poison into food, he will hate the brutal pleasures of the chase by instinct; it will be a contemplation full of horror and disappointment to his mind, that beings capable of the gentlest and most admirable sympathies, should take delight in the death-pangs and last convulsions of dying animals. The elderly man, whose youth has been poisoned by intemperance, or who has lived with apparent moderation, and is afflicted with a variety of painful

maladies, would find his account in a beneficial change, produced without the risk of poisonous medicines. The mother, to whom the perpetual restlessness of disease, and unaccountable deaths incident to her children, are the causes of incurable unhappiness, would on this diet experience the satisfaction of beholding their perpetual healths and natural playfulness.*

The most valuable lives are daily destroyed by diseases, that it is dangerous to palliate and impossible to cure by medicine. How much longer will man continue to pimp for the gluttony of death, his most insidious, implacable, and eternal foe?

Ἀλλὰ δράκοντας ἀγρίους καλεῖτε καὶ παρδάλεις καὶ λέοντας, αὐτοὶ δὲ μαιφονεῖτε εἰς ὠμότητα καταλιπόντες ἐκείνοις οὐδέν. Εκείνοις μὲν γὰρ ὁ φόνος τροφὴ, ὑμῖν δ' ὄψον ἐστίν.

* * * * * *

Ὅτι γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνθρώπῳ κατὰ φύσιν τὸ σαρκοφαγεῖν, πρῶτον μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν σωμάτων δηλοῦται τῆς κατασκευῆς. Οὐδενὶ γὰρ ἔοικε τὸ ἀνθρώπου σῶμα τῶν ἐπὶ σαρκοφαγίᾳ γεγονότων, οὐ γρυπότης χείλους, οὐκ ὀξύτης ὄνυχος, οὐ τραχύτης ὀδόντων πρόσεστιν, οὐ κοιλίας εὐτονία καὶ πνεύματος θερμότης, τρέψαι καὶ κατεργάσασθαι δυνατὴ τό βαρὺ καὶ κρεῶδες. Ἀλλ' αὐτόθεν ἡ φύσις τῇ λειότητι τῶν ὀδόντων, καὶ τῇ σμικρότητι τοῦ στόματος, καὶ τῇ μαλακότητι

* See Mr. Newton's book. His children are the most beautiful and healthy creatures it is possible to conceive; the girls are perfect models for a sculptor; their dispositions are also the most gentle and conciliating; the judicious treatment which they experience in other points, may be a correlative cause of this. In the first five years of their life, of 18,000 children that are born, 7,500 die of various diseases; and how many more of those that survive are not rendered miserable by maladies not immediately mortal? The quality and quantity of a woman's milk are materially injured by the use of dead flesh. In an island, near Iceland, where no vegetables are to be got, the children invariably die of tetanus, before they are three weeks old, and the population is supplied from the main land.—*Sir G. Mackenzie's Hist. of Iceland.* See also *Emile*, chap. i. pp. 53, 54, 56.

τῆς γλώσσης, καὶ τῇ πρὸς πέψιν ἀμβλύτητι τοῦ πνεύματος, ἐξόμνυται τὴν σαρκοφαγίαν. Εἰ δὲ λέγεις, πεφυκέναι σεαυτὸν ἐπὶ τοιαύτην ἐδωδὴν, ὃ βούλει φαγεῖν, πρῶτος αὐτὸς ἀπόκτεινον· ἀλλ' αὐτὸς, διὰ σεαυτοῦ, μὴ χρησάμενος κοπίδι, μηδὲ τυμπάνῳ τινὶ μηδὲ πελέκει· ἀλλὰ, ὡς λύκοι καὶ ἄρκτοι, καὶ λέοντες αὐτοὶ ὡς ἐσθίουσι φονευούσιν, ἄνελε δήγματι βοῦν, ἢ σώματι σῦν, ἢ ἄρνα ἢ λαγῶον διάῤῥηξον, καὶ φάγε προσπεσὼν ἔτι ζῶντος ὡς ἐκεῖνα.

* * * * * *

Ἡμεῖς δὲ οὕτως ἐν τῷ μιαιφόνῳ τρυφῶμεν, ὥστε ὄψον τὸ κρέας προσαγορεύομεν εἶτα ὄψων προς ἀυτὸ τὸ κρέας δεόμεθα, ἀναμιγνύντες ἔλαιον, οἶνον, μέλι, γάρον, ὄξος, ἡδύσμασι Συριακοῖς, Ἀῤῥαβικοῖς, ὥσπερ ὄντως νεκρὸν ἐνταφιάζοντες. Καὶ γὰρ ὅτως αὐτων διαλυθέντων καὶ μαλαχθέντων καὶ τρόπον τίνα κρεοσαπέντων ἔργον ἐστὶ τὴν πέψιν κρατῆσαι· καὶ διακρατεθείσης δὲ δεινὰς Βαρύτητας καὶ μοσωδεις ἀπεψίας.

* * * * * *

Οὕτω τὸ πρῶτον ἄγριον τι ζῶον ἐβρώθη καὶ κακοῦργον, εἶτα ὄρνις τις ἢ ἰχθύς εἱλκυστο· καὶ γεύομενον οὕτω καὶ προμελετῆσαν ἐν ἐκείνοις τὸ νικοῦν, ἐπι βοῦν ἐργάτην ἦλθε, καὶ τὸ κοσμουν πρόβατον, καὶ τὸν οἰκουρον ἀλεκτρύονα· καὶ κατα μικρὸν οὕτω τὴν ἀπληστιάν τονώσαντες, ἐπι σφαγὰς ἀνθρώπων, καὶ φόνους καὶ πολέμους προῆλθον.*

Πλουτ. περὶ τῆς σαρκοφαγίας.

[The substance of this note, with some additions, appeared shortly afterwards in a pamphlet form under the title of *A Vindication of Natural Diet, being one of a series of Notes to Queen Mab, a Philosophical Poem*, pp. 43. On the title is a motto from Hesiod's Works and Days. The additions made in this pamphlet are curious and worth preservation. Thus, after speaking of "Mr. Newton's luminous and eloquent essay" (*vide anteà*, p. 353), Shelley goes on to say :—

"It is from that book, and from the conversation of its

excellent and enlightened author, that I have derived the materials which I here present to the public."

The pamphlet omits the Greek quotation from Plutarch, and concludes thus :—

"The proselyte to a simple and natural diet who desires health, must from the moment of his conversion attend to these rules :—

NEVER TAKE ANY SUBSTANCE INTO THE STOMACH THAT ONCE HAD LIFE.

DRINK NO LIQUID BUT WATER RESTORED TO ITS ORIGINAL PURITY BY DISTILLATION.

APPENDIX.

Persons on vegetable diet have been remarkable for longevity. The first Christians practised abstinence from animal flesh, on a principle of self-mortification.

1. Old Parr 152
   Cheyne's Essay on Health, p. 62.
2. Mary Patten 136
   Gent. Mag., vii–449.
3. A shepherd in Hungary 126
   Morning Post, Jan. 28, 1800.
4. Patrick O'Neale 113
   Emile, 1–44.
5. Joseph Elkins 103
   He died at Coombe, in Northumberland.
6. Elizabeth de Val 101
   Scots Magazine, xxxiv–696.
7. Aurungzebe 100
   Aurungzebe, from the time of his usurpation, adhered strictly to the vegetable system.

St. Anthony 105
James the Hermit 104
Arsenius 120

St. Epiphanius	115
Simeon	112
Rombald	120

Mr. Newton's mode of reasoning on longevity is ingenious and conclusive.

"Old Parr, healthy as the wild animals, attained to the age of 152 years.

"All men might be as healthy as the wild animals.

"Therefore all men might attain to the age of 152 years." (*Return to Nature.*)

The conclusion is sufficiently modest. Old Parr cannot be supposed to have escaped the inheritance of disease amassed by the unnatural habits of his ancestors. The term of human life may be expected to be infinitely greater, taking into the consideration all the circumstances that must have contributed to abridge even that of Parr.

It may be here remarked, that the author and his wife have lived on vegetables for eight months. The improvements of health and temper here stated is the result of his own experience.

QUEEN MAB AND ITS AUTHOR.

To the Editor of THE EXAMINER.

"SIR,—Having heard that a poem, entitled *Queen Mab*, has been surreptitiously published in London, and that legal proceedings have been instituted against the publisher, I request the favour of your insertion of the following explanation of the affair as it relates to me.

"A poem, entitled *Queen Mab*, was written by me at the age of eighteen, I dare say in a sufficiently intemperate

spirit—but even then was not intended for publication, and a few copies only were struck off, to be distributed among my personal friends. I have not seen this production for several years: I doubt not but that it is perfectly worthless in point of literary composition; and that in all that concerns moral and political speculation, as well as in the subtler discriminations of metaphysical and religious doctrine, it is still more crude and immature. I am a devoted enemy to religious, political, and domestic oppression; and I regret this publication, not so much from literary vanity, as because I fear it is better fitted to injure than to serve the cause of freedom. I have directed my solicitor to apply to Chancery for an injunction to restrain the sale; but after the precedent of Mr. Southey's *Wat Tyler* (a poem, written, I believe, at the same age, and with the same unreflecting enthusiasm), with little hopes of success.

"Whilst I exonerate myself from all share in having divulged opinions hostile to existing sanctions, under the form, whatever it may be, which they assume in this poem, it is scarcely necessary for me to protest against the system of inculcating the truth of Christianity and the excellence of Monarchy, however true or however excellent they may be, by such equivocal arguments as confiscation, and imprisonment, and invective, and slander, and the insolent violation of the most sacred ties of nature and society.

"Sir, I am,

"Your obliged and obedient servant,

"PERCY B. SHELLEY.*

"Pisa, June 22, 1821."

* Printed in *The Examiner*, July 15, 1821

NOTES TO HELLAS.

Vol. II. p. 421. The quenchless ashes of Milan.

MILAN was the centre of the resistance of the Lombard league against the Austrian tyrant. Frederic Barbarossa burnt the city to the ground, but liberty lived in its ashes, and it rose like an exhalation from its ruin. See Sismondi's *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes*, a book which has done much towards awakening the Italians to an imitation of their great ancestors.

P. 426. The Chorus.

The popular notions of Christianity are represented in this chorus as true in their relation to the worship they superseded, and that which in all probability they will supersede, without considering their merits in a relation more universal. The first stanza contrasts the immortality of the living and thinking beings which inhabit the planets, and, to use a common and inadequate phrase *clothe themselves in matter*—with the transience of the noblest manifestations of the external world.

The concluding verses indicate a progressive state of more or less exalted existence, according to the degree of perfection which every distinct intelligence may have attained. Let it not be supposed that I mean to dogmatize upon a subject, concerning which all men are equally ignorant, or that I think the Gordian knot of the origin of evil can be disentangled by that or any similar assertions. The received hypothesis of a Being resembling men in the moral attributes of his nature, having called us out of non-existence, and after inflicting on us the misery of the commission of error, should superadd that of the punishment and the privations consequent upon it, still would remain inexplicable and incredible. That there is a true

solution of the riddle, and that in our present state that solution is unattainable by us, are propositions which may be regarded as equally certain: meanwhile, as it is the province of the poet to attach himself to those ideas which exalt and ennoble humanity, let him be permitted to have conjectured the condition of that futurity towards which we are all impelled by an inextinguishable thirst for immortality. Until better arguments can be produced than sophisms which disgrace the cause, this desire itself must remain the strongest and the only presumption that eternity is the inheritance of every thinking being.

P. 428. No hoary priest after that Patriarch.

The Greek Patriarch, after having been compelled to fulminate an anathema against the insurgents, was put to death by the Turks.

Fortunately, the Greeks have been taught that they cannot buy security by degradation, and the Turks, though equally cruel, are less cunning than the smooth-faced tyrants of Europe. As to the anathema, his Holiness might as well have thrown his mitre at Mount Athos for any effect that it produced. The chiefs of the Greeks are almost all men of comprehension and enlightened views on religion and politics.

P. 437. The freedman of a Western poet chief.

A Greek who had been Lord Byron's servant, commands the insurgents in Attica. This Greek, Lord Byron informs me, though a poet and an enthusiastic patriot, gave him rather the idea of a timid and unenterprising person. It appears that circumstances make men what they are, and that we all contain the germ of a degree of degradation or of greatness, whose connexion with our character is determined by events.

P. 439. The Greeks expect a Saviour from the West.

It is reported that this Messiah had arrived at a seaport near Lacedæmon, in an American brig. The association of names and ideas is irresistibly ludicrous, but the prevalence of such a rumour strongly marks the state of popular enthusiasm in Greece.

P. 446. The sound is of an assault of an Imperial City.

For the vision of Mahmud of the taking of Constantinople in 1445, see Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," vol. xii. p. 223.

The manner of the invocation of the spirit of Mahomet the Second, will be censured as over subtle. I could easily have made the Jew a regular conjuror, and the Phantom an ordinary ghost. I have preferred to represent the Jew as disclaiming all pretension, or even belief, in supernatural agency, and as tempting Mahmud to that state of mind in which ideas may be supposed to assume the force of sensations through the confusion of thought with the objects of thought, and the excess of passion animating the creations of imagination.

It is a sort of natural magic susceptible of being exercised in a degree by any one who should have made himself master of the secret association of another's thoughts.

P. 454. Chorus.

The final Chorus is indistinct and obscure, as the event of the living drama whose arrival it foretells. Prophecies of wars, and rumours of wars, &c., may safely be made by poet or prophet in any age, but to anticipate, however darkly, a period of regeneration and happiness, is a more hazardous exercise of the faculty which bards possess or feign. It will remind the reader "magno *nec*

proximus intervallo" of Isaiah and Virgil, whose ardent spirits, overleaping the actual reign of evil which we endure and bewail, already saw the possible and perhaps approaching state of society in which the "*lion shall lie down with the lamb*," and "omnis feret omnia tellus." Let these great names be my authority and my excuse.

P. 425. Saturn and Love their long repose shall burst.

Saturn and Love were among the deities of a real or imaginary state of innocence or happiness. *All* those *who fell*, or the Gods of Greece, Asia, and Egypt; and *the many unsubdued*, or the monstrous objects of the idolatry of China, India, the Antarctic islands, and the native tribes of America, certainly have reigned over the understandings of men in conjunction or in succession, during periods in which all we know of evil has been in a state of portentous, and, until the revival of learning and the arts, perpetually increasing activity. The Grecian gods seem indeed to have been personally more innocent, although it cannot be said, that as far as temperance and chastity are concerned, they gave very edifying examples. The horrors of the Mexican, the Peruvian, and the Indian superstitions are well known.

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